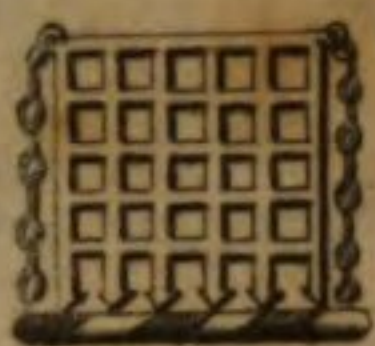


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THE
HISTORY
OF
EGYPT;

FROM
THE EARLIEST ACCOUNTS OF THAT COUNTRY,
TILL THE
EXPULSION OF THE FRENCH FROM ALEXANDRIA,
IN THE YEAR 1801.

By *JAMES WILSON, D.D.*
Minister of Falkirk.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

Volume II.

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HISTORY
OF
EGYPT.
BOOK V.

CHAP. I.

Egypt a province of Rome, and governed by a prefect. . . . Of Cornelius Gallus. . . . Of Petronius and Ælius Gallus. . . . Virgil's fourth eclogue. . . . The death and character of Herod. . . . The Egyptian worship at Rome. . . . The reign of Caligula, Claudius, Nero, Vespasian, and Trajan.

AFTER the dynasty of the Ptolemean race had lasted about 294 years, it was brought to a conclusion by the death of Cleopatra. The Philippic era began with the reign of Philippus Are-

deus ; and now there sprung up another which might have been called the Alexandrian, but so direct an allusion to the fall of the Egyptian monarchy would have been unpleasant to the nation, and therefore the era was called the Actiac. Thus correctness was sacrificed to delicacy ; for the victory at Actium was obtained on the 2^d of September, but the new era did not commence till the 29th of Sextilus, or the 6th Roman month, which was afterwards denominated August, in honour of Augustus Cæsar. The 29th of August was fixed upon for the beginning of this period, because it was the first day of the Egyptian month Thoth, and the commencement of their new year.

In reality, however, the Actian epoch began upon the 31st of August, though nominally upon the 29th of that month, for the Julian calendar had run into disorder by the inattention of those who were vested with the power of regulating the year. They had added the su-

pernumerary day to February every third instead of every fourth year. Upon discovering the error, and finding that it had run through 36 years, Augustus ordered the leap year to be omitted thrice in succession, and thus the calculation was restored to the state in which Julius Cæsar left it, when he abolished the lunar and introduced the solar year. The lunar year, which was in use among the Romans, consisted of 355 days and some intercallary arrangements, whereas the solar year comprehends 365 days, 5 hours, 48 minutes, and about 48 seconds.^a These he divided into twelve months of different lengths, as they now stand ; and every fourth year added a supernumerary day to February, and placed it between the 23^d and 24th of that month. As the 24th of February was called by the Romans *Sextus calendas*, the putting this day twice in leap year, occasioned it to be called the Bis-

^a Mackay on the longitude, vol. i, p. 14.

sextile ; but instead of making the 24th day of February twice in the leap year, as the Romans did, we proceed regularly with the numbers, and instead of 28 give that month 29 days.

An additional day being inserted every fourth year, carries the calculation before the true time, so that during the course of every 130 years the beginning of January is a day too late, or, in other words, a day more than the true time has been added to the calculation. Pope Gregory XIII, A. D. 1582, rectified the error which was past, and to keep the calculation near the truth in future, he proposed that from A. D. 1600, the first year of every four, instead of every successive century should be a leap year, and this would reduce the order of time to so much correctness that no considerable error could ensue. The Julian method of reckoning is denominated the old stile, and the Gregorian the new. The latter of

these was introduced into Britain A. D. 1752.

The method of computation in Egypt, during the Philippic era, was that of Nabonassar, or Chaldea; and the year included twelve months of 30 days each. Five intercalary days were added, without a leap year; and thus the beginning of the new year was carried through every month and season, till, in the course of 1460 years, it arrived at the point from which it set out; but one year of real time was lost. When the Romans became masters of the country, they did not change the form of the Egyptian year, but, to prevent its circulating tendency, and reduce it nearly to truth, instead of five, which was the usual number, they added six days every fourth year, and therefore virtually, though not in form, it was the same as the Julian computation.^b

^b Macrob. Satur. lib. i, c. 14; Sueton. in Aug. c. 31; and Prideaux, vol. iv, lib. vii, p. 130; & lib. viii, p. 233, &c.

When Egypt sunk into a province of Rome, its history as well as its glory was cast into the shade ; and while it continued to be a branch of that extensive empire, the transactions of Egypt were subordinate to the influence and power of Rome. Scattered and without connection as they are, let us endeavour to collect the historical events of Egypt, and present them to view in the best form which circumstances permit.

The more easily to divest Antony of the triumviral power, and to disguise his own selfish designs, Augustus stript himself of every public office, and went to the battle of Actium merely in the capacity of a Roman consul ; but when Egypt was wholly at his command, he threw off the mask, and assumed a bolder tone. He did not, as usual, send to the senate for instructions, but upon his own authority appointed a governor, and adopted measures of expediency and profit. In the pretended division of the

empire between him and the senate of Rome, Egypt was one of those provinces which he retained for himself. During many of the late feeble and dissipated reigns, the Egyptians had been addicted to insubordination, and therefore he adopted strong measures, to prevent disorder and insure peace.

Lest the Egyptians should aspire to independence, or some artful Roman declare himself their leader, no intercourse was suffered to exist between the noblemen of Rome and those of Egypt. To prevent every fear of disloyalty, where every thing deceitful and violent was to be apprehended, Augustus made choice of Cor. Gallus for managing the government of Egypt.^a When vested with the command of Paretonium, he had shewn himself friendly to the interests of Augustus; and being only of equestrian rank, he was not precluded from an office in Egypt. As a further guard against

^a Tacit. Hist. lib. i, c, 2; Dio Cass. lib. li, p. 279.

the contingencies of ambition, Egypt was governed in a different manner from the other provinces intrusted to Augustus. Whereas they were under the immediate direction of proprætors, who possessed military rank, and were accountable only to Cæsar, the governor of Egypt was but a prefect. Part of the provincial powers of this nation were vested in an officer denominated *juridicus*, who administered justice, and managed the fines and forfeitures of the state. Thus the prefect was without two great instruments of aggrandizement, the power of life and death, and the command of the public money.^b

These precautions, connected with the power of the governor, which was delegated only for a year, were deemed sufficient to secure loyal deportment: but all these schemes of care and prevention were found to be insufficient for preserving Gallus in the line of his

^b Taylor's Summary of Roman law, p. 327.

duty. Opportunities of riches and influence brought into action propensities and passions, which till then had been dormant. His powers were restrained by the boundaries I have described, but still they were vast; and while he aggrandised himself, he oppressed the people: he demanded heavy taxes, plundered the temples, and harassed the cities. He inscribed his own name, and celebrated his own transactions, on the pyramids and places of public resort; and, by the influence of his power, statues were erected in his praise. The report of his ambition was carried to Rome; and to suppress his aspiring views, Augustus removed him from his office; and, as a mark of high displeasure, forbade him to approach his presence, or enter into any of the provinces which were called imperial.

In Cor. Gallus we see an instance of that inveterate rage which friendship converted into enmity seldom fails to produce. Embittered friendship feels

deeper rancour than that which is engendered by the common offences of life. The high attachment which the Egyptian prefect felt for Augustus sunk into hatred and deep resentment. In the day of his disgrace every favour was forgotten, and he spoke with disrespect of his former friend Cæsar Augustus. So open and violent were his proceedings, that they roused the senate into a spirit of inquiry, and a decree was passed that he should be banished from the territories of Rome. But he refused to survive the sentence, and, by a voluntary death, defied the punishment. While these things were transacted, Augustus was in Spain, suppressing an insurrection upon the mountainous coast of the bay of Biscay. He sighed for the fate of Gallus, and expressed deep regret that he had not been consulted in punishing the crimes of an old, though treacherous friend.^c

^c Strabo Geo. Amstelodami, A. D. 1707, lib. xvii, p. 1151; and Tacit. Ann. lib. vi, c. 23.

The poetical merit, as well as the military glory, of Gallus, contributed toward the esteem in which he was held by Augustus. He was also beloved by Virgil; and to him that poet addressed his tenth eclogue, in relation to the tender attachment which Gallus cherished for the unworthy Lycoris. That false and ungrateful lady forsook the fond endearments of Gallus, and followed Antony to the camp; but there she was superseded in his affections by the arts of the celebrated Cleopatra, and suffered the disgrace which licentiousness deserves, and which, in the wisdom of providence, it generally receives. We are told that Virgil wrote an eulogium upon Gallus, and subjoined it to his Georgics, but afraid of giving offence to Cæsar, whom his friend had justly offended, he expunged the beautiful effusions of affection, and added the delightful episode of Euridyce and Aristeus.^d

^d Lempr. Dic. word Gallus.

It is not completely ascertained whether Cor. Gallus was succeeded in the prefecture of Egypt by Petronius, or Ælius Gallus, but we know that the latter made an expedition into the southern parts of Arabia. The riches of India had long been the source of wealth to Egypt; and though Augustus had resolved not to extend the limits of the Roman empire, yet he now determined, either by covenant or conquest, to have at his command the riches of the east. To accomplish this purpose, Ælius marched toward Arabia: Herod, king of Judea, contributed 500, and Obodas, an Arabian prince, 1,000 warriors. It was proposed to lead the army through the territories of the Nabathean Arabs, as Cæsar was in alliance with Obodas, the king of that country. But Sylleus, the prime minister of that sovereign, was averse from the measure, and persuaded the Roman general that the best method of performing his journey was to transport his troops across the Red

sea, and join the Jewish with the Nabathean soldiers at an appointed place, without the boundaries of his master's kingdom.

The danger which attended the navigation of the Arabian gulf was greatly increased by not knowing the situation of the rocks with which it abounds; and it was accomplished with considerable loss in the army of Ælius. He was conducted to Arabia Felix, through unnecessary difficulties, and by roads almost impervious, yet still he penetrated far into the country, because the rude valour of the opposing nations could not withstand the discipline and skill of the Roman legions, but climate and disease thinned his ranks, and compelled him to return. On his march homewards, he was conducted by better guides; and the treachery of Sylleus was completely understood. This false and officious statesman was not then punished; but treachery toward Herod, and his own master Obodas filled up the measure of

his guilt, and being led to Rome, he was formally condemned, and publicly executed by the rod and ax of the lictor.

When Gallus arrived at Alexandria, he found that, in his absence, Candace, queen of Ethiopia, had invaded Upper Egypt, and taken by surprise Elefantina, Phyllis, and Syene. In the meantime, C. Petronius appears to have become prefect of Egypt, and was probably appointed to that office when Ælius Gallus went into Arabia. This able general attacked the Ethiopian queen with a numerous and well appointed army; and pursuing her over sands and deserts, he destroyed Napata, the capital of her kingdom, and did not return till he was compelled to abandon the country, by the heat and dangers of the climate.

Scarcely had the Egyptian prefect left Ethiopia, when Candace attempted to recover the possessions which she had lost; but the Roman garrisons quickly

repelled her force, and she was exposed to severe terms of peace, which were only abated in their rigour by the clemency and favour of Augustus Cæsar.^b

In the reign of this emperor, Egypt became for a season the depository of Jesus Christ, whither Joseph and Mary fled from the insidious cruelty of Herod the king. An idea was then prevalent, that in the east a powerful personage should rise, and that out of Judea a conqueror should come.^c This expectation was excited among the heathens by the oracles in which they trusted, and among the Jews by the tendency and promises of their sacred books. Consistently with this general expectation, the fourth eclogue of Virgil appears to have been composed, though many doubts have been suggested with respect to the person alluded to in the poem. The production is addressed to Minius Pollio,

^b Dio Cass. lib. liii, p. 321.

^c Tacit. Hist. lib. v, c. 13.

but the child to be born appears rather to be represented as destined to come into the world while he was consul, than as one to be born in his own house. Though some therefore have supposed it to be descriptive of a child of Pollio, yet more generally it is understood as having respect to an heir in the house of Augustus.

In the year of Rome 714, a civil commotion was averted by the reconciliation which was made between Antony and Octavianus. When Antony retired to his province in the east, as Lepidus was of no consideration in the government, Octavianus had the sovereign rule in the west. By the influence of Pollio, their mutual friend Virgil had obtained the favour of Octavianus, and it was to be expected that the prophetic ideas of a great deliverer, which had been applied to Julius Cæsar, would, in the grateful effusions of the poet, be predicted of the family of Augustus.^a He

^a Cic. de divinatione, lib. 2.

had lately been married to Scribonia, and the expected consequences of that union would naturally be addressed in a complimentary stile to Pollio the patron of Virgil, and a consul of Rome. About this time the Sibylline verses were in great request, and persons were sent into various countries to supply the deficient parts of that prophetic collection. In this general spirit of inquiry, the Jewish Scriptures could not be neglected, and the writings of Isaiah, especially the 7th chapter of that sublime prophet, might furnish materials to Virgil, whose fourth eclogue so much resembles the divine predictions of the Jewish prophet.^a

Jesus was born in Bethlehem Judah, in the 749th year after the foundation of Rome, at the time when an account was taking of the riches and number of the people who dwelt within the pre-

^a Lowth's Lectures 22d; and the notes in Gregory's edit.

cincts of the Roman empire. Joseph and Mary went out from Nazareth to be inrolled at Bethlehem, which was the city of David, to whose lineage they belonged; and, as multitudes were assembled in that town for the same purpose, the knowledge of Christ's birth was soon and far extended. Wise men from the east, probably belonging to the Magians of Persia, arrived at Bethlehem. In allusion to the adoration which they paid to the sun in the firmament, they are represented as having come to worship Jesus, the son of righteousness that had arisen on the world.

The noise of these events reached Herod the king of Judea; and he was fearful of the fame and promised power of the long expected prince. To cut off, as he thought, the possibility of danger, he resolved to destroy Jesus. For this purpose he attempted craftily to get him into his power; but his design being known, means were taken to

frustrate his intentions, and he made one desperate effort to seize him in the grasp of force and cruelty. Pursuing the steps of savage wildness, he *‘ sent forth and slew all the children which were in Bethlehem and the borders thereof ;’* and, that the dreaded prince might not escape, the bloody order extended to all those *‘ from two years old and under.’*^b But Joseph, taking Jesus and his mother, fled by night toward the land of Egypt.

An order so unprecedented, so bloody, and so abhorrent from every principle of humanity and justice, can scarcely be admitted as possible in the whole corrupt exertions of the human heart. That ambition and wickedness might occasion the death of an unsuspecting infant, that the madness of passion and the fury of war might stifle compassion and extend cruelty to the helpless and innocent, are mournful truths, which the

^b Matth. ch. xi.

history of man has recorded in the catalogue of his crimes. But what must have been the sentiments of that monster, who, in the current of ambition, could spread general carnage among unoffending children, and by their expiring cries rend the hearts of so many mothers, and cover the land with so much horror? yet such was Herod the king of the Jews!!!

There are several dark shades in the character of this man, so much allied to the horror hereby described, that independent of the sacred history, where the assertion is recorded, they ascertain the charge and confirm the fact. By this influence of Antony, Herod obtained the crown of Judea, and his royal garments were soon stained in blood. At his approach to the throne, the lineal heirs of the kingdom perished; instances of perfidy dishonour his history; and the progress of his violence can scarcely be equalled. Mariamne, his beautiful and virtuous wife, her grand-

father Hyrcanus, 80 years of age, and three of his own sons, fell before his rage. If any thing besides were wanting to shew that he was capable of an order which was red with blood, it would be sufficient to state, that he attempted to have the hour of his death marked by universal destruction in his kingdom. Knowing how much he was hated by his subjects, and believing that the announcing of his death would be the signal of joy, he assembled the chief persons of the nation, ordered them to be shut up in the circus, and strictly enjoined that the departure of his last breath should be the sign for the destroying sword of the military to cut off the assembly without distinction or mercy. But with Herod, the fear of his displeasure expired; humanity laid claim to her rights, and the dreadful order was not fulfilled.^a

A. D. 14.—Augustus having died at Nola, in the 76th year of his age, Ti-

^a Jos. Antiq. lib. xvi, c. 17; and lib. xvii, c. 8 & 10.

berius who, for three years, had assisted in managing the affairs of state, took upon himself the whole direction of the government. He opened his career with professions of moderation and wisdom ; but his progress was marked by violence and iniquity. He was conspicuous, however, for moderation in taxes ; and, in the early part of his reign, he redressed some disorders of the state. His conduct respecting the Egyptian temples at Rome is worthy of observation, and deserves to be recorded. The Romans were accustomed to worship a variety of gods, and as their extensive empire included a great diversity of nations, they were inclined, both from policy and feeling, to indulge them respectively in the religious services and forms of their country. Some jealousies of Rome, not described, prevented, for a while, the temples of the Egyptian worship from being erected within the walls of the city ; and, when an altar to the god Serapis was surreptitiously built, it was

commanded by the senate to be destroyed. When over-weaning zeal had again disobeyed the command, the worship was permitted, but with this stipulation, that whereas it was formerly allowed to have Egyptian temples without the *Pomærium*, or sacred space about the walls, they were now forbidden to be erected within half a mile of the city. But a base transaction happened in the reign of Tiberius, which rendered the Egyptian worship more than ever an object of just abhorrence.^b

Decimus Mundus, who was a Roman knight, and a licentious young man, attempted to seduce Paulina, the wife of Saturninus. She was a lady of virtue, as well as of beauty and rank, and nobly resisted every allurement and persuasion; but she lost her honour and her peace by the crafty snares of a priest of Isis. Having been bribed by Mundus, he per-

^b Dio. Cass. lib. xl, p. 252, & lib. liii, p. 697; et S. Aurelius Victor de Cæsaribus, c. 21.

suaded the lady, who was much attached to the Egyptian worship, that she was passionately beloved by the god Anubis, and that she was required to meet him on a certain evening in the temple of Isis. Mundus thus obtained by fraud what he could not accomplish by persuasion ; but the infamous deed was soon made known, and loudly condemned. The whole city was indignant ; the noble lady shrunk from the light of heaven ; and the emperor Tiberius punished the villains. Mundus was banished ; the agents of the seduction were crucified. The temple of Isis being thrown down, the image was cast into the Tyber, and many devotees were sent into exile.^a But the worship of Serapis was afterwards admitted into Rome, perhaps in the time of Vespasian, who had visited Egypt, and was highly favoured by the priests and attendants of this god. Impressions of his image were upon the

^a Tacit. Ann. lib. ii, c. 85 ; Juv. Sat. vi, v. 526.

coins of Titus and Domitian, and even upon rings which were made and worn during their reigns. His temple was placed in the Flaminian circus, and highly adorned with the arts and riches of Rome.^b

From the credulity of Paulina, we learn how abject the state of religion must have been in the time of Tiberius Cæsar. If, when the highly polished age of Augustus was scarcely finished,—if, when its effects were in some degree remaining, such gross sentiments prevailed about things divine, what must have been the general state of the heathen world? If a woman of Paulina's rank, knowledge, and tried integrity, could be so duped and misled by the sentiments of a false religion, what must have been the ignorance and the corruption of the people at large. How could the affections of the worshipper be pure, if the religion itself was vile?

^b Middleton's Miscel. works, 4to, vol. iv, tab. 13, p. 104.

How could the minds of the people be elevated and virtuous, when the ideas of religion were so gross and unhallowed?

The Jews being connected with the Egyptians, as many of them had settled among that people, were also exposed to religious persecution. Their worship too was forbidden in the city of Rome, and many of themselves were compelled to renounce their religion, or submit to banishment. But perhaps, in this time of jealousy and alarm, the conduct of the Jews themselves might in part be the occasion of their sufferings. The Jews enjoyed the benefit of the extensive toleration of Rome; but they might become objects of suspicion, not only as being connected with Egypt, but because they resolutely refused to respect the gods of the empire, and perhaps imprudently, though with justice, inveighed against the worship of false gods.^c

^c Sueton. in Tiber. c. 36; and Exod. c. xx, v. 3.

A. D. 37.—In Egypt, as well as at Rome, the emperor C. Cæsar Caligula was received with shouts of universal joy, and began his reign with numerous acts of moderation ; but the expectations which he had raised were soon lost in disappointment. After having reigned with clemency and affection for the space of eight months, he was seized by a dangerous disease ; but while the empire was in tears for his situation, he recovered from his affliction, and the nation rejoiced. But when he rose from the bed of sickness, he appeared in a different character ; severity clouded his brow, and cruelty followed his steps. He assumed the most pompous titles, was clothed in awful terror, and his family, his friends, and his enemies, were equally exposed to his fury. He slept little from the time of his illness ; and the extravagance of his conduct was ascribed to frenzy, which intemperance and disease had produced.

In the midst of his extravagant hu-

mours, he claimed the privilege of being ranked among the gods, and equal in dignity to Jupiter himself. Fear and adulation granted him his wish; but while the nation at large yielded him the homage which he required, the Jews, in obedience to the dictates of their religion, refused to offer him divine honours. With others they rejoiced in his recovery, and with others they presented sacrifices; but the oblations were not offered to him; they were presented in gratitude to Heaven for his safety and preservation. Avillius Flaccus, who was then prefect of Egypt, in order to indulge his own hatred, and gain the favour of Caligula, persecuted, with unrelenting severity, the Jewish people who resided in and about Alexandria. This he did upon pretence of avenging the cause of the emperor, whom the Jews refused to worship as a god. Avillius overthrew their oratories, and destroyed many of their synagogues. The trees were cut down, which in a sultry climate

afford an agreeable shade to their places of worship ; and those sacred buildings which escaped destruction were polluted in the eyes of the Jews, by placing within their walls images and statues of the deified Caligula. Encouraged by the conduct of their governor, the people of Alexandria plundered the Jews, and crowded them into one corner of the city, where many of them died by famine and disease.

During the continuance of these scenes of horror, Agrippa arrived from Rome, on his way to be invested with the royal dignity at Jerusalem. Agrippa being in favour with the emperor, wrote to him a statement of the dismal transactions in Egypt, which outraged humanity and order. Avillius Flaccus was recalled from Alexandria, tried at Rome, and banished to Andros.

But still the Jews were not protected at Alexandria ; for the government was weak, as well as wicked ; and neither from principle nor inclination were the

Jews disposed to conciliate the favour of their enemies. Both parties appealed to Rome, and sent an embassy to Cæsar. At the head of the Jewish deputies was Philo, a celebrated philosopher; and at that of the Egyptians was Apion, the famous philologist. While waiting to know the pleasure of the emperor, the business assumed different aspects; sometimes threatening, and sometimes soothing, to the Jews; but nothing decisive appears to have been done; and the people were still suffering in Egypt. The same frantic idea of being a divinity induced Caligula to issue an order, which could not have been fulfilled but upon the ruins of the Jewish nation. His resolution was, to have his statue placed, as that of a god, in the temple of Jerusalem itself. The knowledge of this purpose shook the kingdom in all its parts; every where there was rage, and every where resistance. If, upon a principle of conscience, the Jews had refused to worship Caligula, the prospect of seeing

his statue in the temple of Jerusalem, the idea of a profane image occupying the sanctuary of Jehovah, filled them with amazement, and struck them with horror. But Agrippa interceded with the emperor; his application was successful, and the dangerous intention was laid aside.^a

A. D. 41.—While Claudius sat upon the throne of Rome, the conquests of the empire were far extended into Africa; but in Egypt little of consequence appears to have been achieved. Peace and repose seem to have succeeded the violent proceedings of the former reign. In cultivating the arts of peace, Claudius contributed to the splendour of the Alexandrian college; and, to adorn Rome, an obelisk was conveyed in a large vessel from Egypt, and placed in the circus upon Mount Vatican. From the strictness of discipline which was now exer-

^a Philo. lib. in Flaccum, et de legatione in Caium passim, fol. edit. Basileæ, A. D. 1561.

cised in Egypt, some of the more turbulent spirits appear to have retired from the country ; for we find that an Egyptian robber conducted a band of desperate adventurers to Jerusalem ; and while they were allowed to indulge their antipathy toward the Jews, he promised them abundance of plunder : but the people of the country joining Felix, the Roman governor, the desperate band were overthrown, and only a few, together with their leader, escaped. In allusion to this event, the captain of the Roman bands, who rescued the apostle Paul from the fury of the people at Jerusalem, asked him, when in custody, if he were not that Egyptian who some time before had raised a tumult, and was put to flight.^a

A. D. 54.—During the reign of Nero, the affairs of Egypt were little in review ; for the cruelty and vices of this emperor held the whole nations in terror.

^a Suet. in Claud. c. 20 ; Valesii Annot. in hist. Euseb. lib. 2.

He publicly expressed an intention of visiting Egypt ; but, when standing in the temple of Vesta, to present an oblation for a prosperous voyage, he was suddenly overpowered by fear. Vice had enfeebled his mind ; and so struck was he by the awful forebodings of a guilty conscience, that, in a panic of terror, his whole frame shook, and he durst not commit himself to the seas.

At a time when the Alexandrians were assembled to draw up an address to Nero, some of the Jews appeared amongst them ; but being still persecuted by the Egyptians, they were insulted and forced to retire. Instantly the Jews surrounded the assembly of the people, and threatened to destroy them ; but Tiberius Alexander, the prefect of Egypt, interposed his authority ; and, being unable to disperse the multitude by persuasion, he opposed them by force. Besides the Roman legions which he had at Alexandria, there were 5,000 soldiers in the city, on their march from Lybia to Je-

rusalem; and with these he instantly suppressed the violence of the Jews. Amid the general havoc of the scene, the prefect listened to the cry of mercy, and commanded the hand of death to be arrested.*

A. D. 69.—In the contest for empire between Otho and Vitellius, Egypt was one of the provinces which declared for Otho. It assisted to overthrow Vitellius, and afterwards, upon Otho's death, to raise Vespasian to the throne. This general marched from Judea towards Egypt, and in the latter country was proclaimed emperor of Rome. The Jews in Egypt appear still to have been turbulent; for, in the reign of Vespasian, Lupus, the governor of that country, chastised their undutiful conduct, by destroying their temple at Onion.

A. D. 98.—Trajan was a wise and much beloved emperor; but, toward the conclusion of his reign, several of the

* Suet in Nero, & Joseph. de bel. lib. ii, c. 21.

provinces revolted from his authority. Among them was Egypt; and the principal agents were Jews. The centre of the revolt was in Cyrenaica; but it diffused itself through Egypt, and pervaded many provinces of Rome. Lupus, the prefect of Alexandria, exerted the functions of his office in this reign also, to suppress the insurgents; but the rebellion continued to spread, till Trajan sent forces sufficient to overcome it.^b

^b Dio. Cass. lib. lxxviii, per Xiph. p. 1145 & 1146.

CHAP. II.

Adrian, the emperor, visits Egypt, and confers privileges upon it. . . . Avidius Cassius usurps the sovereignty. . . . Senators and council granted at Alexandria. . . . Caracalla's violent proceedings in Egypt. . . . Of Origen. . . . Persecution against the christians. . . . Violent commotions in the realm. . . . Of Zenobia queen of Palmyra. . . . Disorders and tumults in Egypt.

A. D. **I**N the 14th year of Adrian's reign, 117. **I**he passed into Egypt, and there he remained for the space of two years. He visited the tomb of Pompey the Great ; repaired and beautified, as we have already seen, that simple but venerable mansion of the dead. The fickle and rapacious temper of the Alexandrians gave the emperor great offence ; but he admired their industry, and bestowed upon them many of those immunities and privileges of which they had

formerly been denuded. He was much delighted with the museum, which had then been considerably enlarged, and, in the sparse style of eastern building, occupied a large district of the city. Having bestowed many valuable boons upon the people of Alexandria, he rebuilt many edifices which violence had thrown down; but he tarnished his visit by a suspicious attachment to the abandoned Antinous. That young man perished in the waters of the Nile; but whether his death was occasioned by accident, or whether, in obedience to magical directions, it was offered as a sacrifice for the benefit of Adrian, varying accounts, and opposite surmises, do not afford us the means of discovering. This, however, is sufficiently ascertained, that he was buried with uncommon pomp, honoured with temples, and ranked among the gods.^c

^c Dio. Cass. lib. lxix, per Xiph. c. 10 & 11, et notas in loco.

Jerusalem having been taken and destroyed by Titus Vespasian, presented nothing but a scene of desolation. Adrian resolved to repair it, and gave orders to have it called *Ælia Capitolina* ; *Ælia*, in reference to his family name, and *Capitolina*, because there he intended to erect a temple to Jupiter Capitolinus. He forbade the Jews to be circumcised, which was a distinguishing rite of their religion ; and attempted to put them into such circumstances as might destroy their national peculiarities, and incorporate them with the general mass of the people. But they were roused to such a frenzy of resistance, that they put to defiance the armies of Adrian, and filled the country with terror.

Standing in this critical situation, the emperor recalled Julius from Britain and sent him into Palestine. He was a general of great address, as well as genuine courage, and not finding it prudent to attack the Jews in the full flow of their ardour and success, he in-

tercepted their provisions, cut off their out-posts, and so much weakened the general body of the army, that they were finally overcome.

Jerusalem, according to some historians, was afterwards taken and laid in ruins. The place whereon the temple of the Lord stood was rendered desolate; and Mount Sion, which was once sacred to religion, was profaned by the furrows of the plough. In ancient times the boundaries of cities to be built were marked by a plough; and the cattle by which it was drawn were afterwards sacrificed to the gods. When cities were thrown down and totally destroyed, their foundations were ploughed as a mark of utter desolation.*

Upon the ruins of Jerusalem was built a new city, which was called *Ælia* by the Romans and the Arabs, but Jerusalem by the christians and Jews. It

* Dio. Cass. lib. lxxix, epit. Xiph. et not. c. 12, &c; Euseb. de monat. Evang. lib. vi, c. 13, lib. viii, c. 3; Philostorg. lib. vii, c. 2; et Horat. lib. i, ode 16.

extended further to the north than the ancient city did, and included Mount Calvary as well as the sepulchre of Jesus. As a mark of disgrace, and in order to prevent future commotions, the Jews were not allowed to approach Jerusalem but upon certain specified conditions; and the prohibition was also extended to all persons who had become christians. Thus the severities of Adrian were carrying forward, without his knowledge or intention, the wise purposes of Heaven. Whereas, till this period, the Jews, who embraced the christian faith, added to its commandments the circumcision of the law, the churches of the Jews now assumed a new shape; and the rites of the law were no longer blended with the precepts of the gospel.^d

A. D. 161.—While M. Aurelius Antoninus was engaged in war with some of the adjoining nations, the affairs of Egypt suddenly commanded his atten-

^d Euseb. Hist. ecclesiast. lib. iv, c. 6, lib. v, c. 12.

tion. In those turbulent times, some of the Egyptians had taken refuge in the fens, and lived by plunder and the feeding of cattle. Some of these freebooters, having dressed themselves in the attire of women, under pretence of paying tribute to the Roman centurian, massacred him and his companions. The Roman soldiers instantly vowed revenge; the Greeks who dwelt in Egypt flew to arms, and vanquished the troops of Rome. The victorious Greeks over-ran a considerable part of the country, and would have entered Alexandria in triumph, if Adidius Cassius had not arrived from Syria, and turned the tide of success against them.

Avidius Cassius had long aspired to the sovereign power; and, upon an unfounded report that Aurelius was dead, he assumed the purple, and was declared emperor. Egypt being discontented, and given to change, was the first province to acknowledge his power. If Cassius had not been too precipitate, his

desire of power might have been gratified ; for Faustina, seeing the emperor, her husband Aurelius, sinking under the pressure of years and infirmity, was favourable to the interests of Cassius ; because the son of the emperor was too young to sit at the helm of affairs, and she dreaded the government of others, who would be less under her controul, and not disposed, like Cassius, to secure the succession to the heir of Aurelius. But the conduct of Avidius Cassius was perfidy and treason, for the emperor was still in life ; and, being unable to defend themselves, Cassius and his son, whom he had appointed governor of Egypt, were instantly put to death. Upon suppressing this treason, the clemency of Aurelius was conspicuous ; and he even spared Flavius Calvisius, who, in the capacity of prefect in Alexandria, had cast the province of Egypt into the arms of the usurper. Not only was mercy conspicuously displayed, but the emperor con-

ferred upon Alexandria many new privileges and important favours.^a

A. D. 193.—The fame and glory of Egypt induced him to visit that country; and he viewed the celebrated monuments of antiquity; ordered many of the public edifices to be repaired; and, with princely munificence, many new and costly buildings were erected. To the city of Alexandria he granted a senate and council of police, which had long been solicited, but in vain. To correct superstition, and weaken the tendency to magic, he collected as many as possible of the books which treated of that subject, falsely called a science, and laid them up in the tomb of Alexander the Great, which he ordered thenceforward never to be opened.

The licentious and dissolved state of the Roman empire required strength and coercion to preserve it from utter destruction; and perhaps in the firm ex-

^a Dio. Cass. lib. lxxi, epit. Xiph. c. 4 & 22, &c.

ercise of power, he might be justly charged with occasional severity. The christians refusing to comply with the rites and appointments of the pagan worship, drew the attention of the powers at Rome, and afforded an opportunity to the artful friends of polytheism of representing the followers of Jesus as secret enemies to the state. It does not appear that Severus published any edict directly against the christians, but he strictly enjoined his subjects not to change their religion; and the agents of government, in the numerous but slightly connected provinces of the empire, had an opportunity, without authority or controul, of carrying forward occasional measures, which corresponded with their own views or interest. Thus, zealous idolators, in the chair of authority, might persecute the christians, without an absolute command, and procure the imperial approbation, by varnishing the deed with zeal for the state. In Egypt the tide of persecution was pecu-

liarly violent, and its boisterous waves were red with the blood of martyrs.^f

A. D. 211.—Bassianus Caracalla, in partnership with his brother Geta, succeeded their father Severus in the imperial powers of Rome; but their partnership was of short duration, and there are not wanting surmises, that Geta fell by the sword of his brother. The Alexandrians, who were famed for satire, exposed to ridicule the blotted character of the emperor; and they in their turn felt the weight of his revenge. Under the pretence of admiring Alexander the Great, he deprived the Aristotelians, in the school of Alexandria, of the public support which was given for encouraging that class of philosophers. Professedly his hatred to the followers of Aristotle was founded upon the belief, that their master had occasioned the death of his pupil Alexander; but

^f Dio. Cass. per Xiph. lib. lxxv, c. 13; et Euseb. Inst. cul. lib. vi, c. 1.

this was adopting an antiquated and improbable opinion, for the purpose of disguising the revenge, which he aimed at the people of Alexandria.

His wrath and his malice acquired strength, and in the violent exertion of the angry passions he rent every veil, threw aside every mask, and assailed Alexandria with madness and revenge. Late-ly he had entered the city with pretensions of friendship; but the frowns of malice sat upon his brow, and he dashed the cup of fury on the unsuspecting inhabitants. In the silent watches of the night, when the people were wrapt in the slumbers of security, the myrmidons of Caracalla entered the places of their abode, and many of them who awoke, started forth in the agonies of death, amid the cries of terror and despair. The return of day lift up its beams to the remaining inhabitants; but their eyes only beheld carnage, and places stained with blood. The light of the morning discovering such scenes of

horror, produced a temporary pause of destruction; but Caracalla commanded, and the havoc was renewed. From the temple of Serapis, where he had devoted the sword with which he slew his brother, the emperor beheld with more than savage pleasure, the extent and terrors of the scene.^a

A. D. 251.—Egypt still continued unsettled and tumultuous. When Macrinus ascended the imperial throne, Basilianus, the prefect of Egypt, refused to acknowledge his authority; but, feeling the approach of the emperor's power, he fled into Italy, and was basely betrayed in the house of a professed friend. During the reign of Decius the christians suffered much, and the arrows of death were peculiarly destructive in Egypt. Soon after Gallus possessed the sovereign command, the celebrated Origen died in the 69th year of his age. He was born at Alexandria, and was a

^a Dio Cass. epit. Xiph. lib. lxxvii, c. 22, &c.

great proficient in various branches of knowledge. He was much attached to the christian cause, and in the persecution by Severus, while he was but a youth, he could scarcely be restrained from exposing himself to danger. When his father Leonidas was in custody, though a wife and seven children depended upon him for support, yet his son requested him to be stedfast in the profession of his faith.

When the father was put to death, the family were cast upon the wide world, and in that forlorn situation they were received into the protection of an amiable lady at Alexandria. But though Origen was then little more than seventeen years of age, he opened a school of polite literature, and delivered the family from the painful state of dependance. The resources which flow from ourselves, though few and scanty, are more valuable and full of peace, than the most plentiful streams of worldly compassion. The merits of Origen

burst into view, and his fame was suddenly exalted. In those times of peril, the divinity school of Alexandria was deserted, and many pupils resorted to Origen. Afterwards he was appointed catechist, by Demetrius bishop of Alexandria, and then he mostly devoted himself to theological pursuits. He was frequently in danger of persecution; but in the reign of Bassianus, who was surnamed Alexander Severus, Julia Mæa, the mother of that prince, not only took him under her own protection, but induced him to visit her, and tarry for a season at Antioch. In the oratory of Alexander Severus was a picture of Jesus Christ: but it might not imply that he was a christian; for he had also collected the portraits of many lawgivers and illustrious men.^a

Origen was sent to an Arabian prince to explain the tenets of the christian

^a Dio. Cass. epit. Xiph. lib. lxxviii, c. 35; Euseb. Hist. lib. vi, c. 41, 42.

faith ; but in the midst of his fame he was recalled from the east, to resume the labours of his office at Alexandria. In a short time he was accused of holding pernicious opinions; and, as Clemens had formerly done, so he assigned the Scriptures, sometimes too plain, and sometimes too allegorical, a sense. By indulging his fancy, he bent the Scriptures to any sentiment, and gave their sanction to any favourite idea. Thus he exposed himself to the review of the church ; and was banished from Alexandria by one council, and deposed from his sacred office by another.^b

A. D. 254.—At the commencement of Valerian's reign, persecutions against christianity continued in Egypt. Macrianus, an idolatrous enthusiast, excited the emperor to this violent conduct ; and Emilian, the prefect of Alexandria, directed the unjust and cruel proceedings. But, in the course of a few

^b Euseb. Hist. eccles. lib. vi, c. 8.

years, Valerian was taken in battle, by Sapor, king of Persia ; and his son Gallienus, who had reigned with his father, had then the management of the empire at large. But his indolence and cruelty soon made him despised ; and there was scarcely a province in the whole empire of Rome where a pretender to the purple did not appear.

Emilian, the prefect of Egypt, seized the sovereignty of his own province, and was well received at Alexandria. To compel the other parts of Egypt to obedience, he took possession of the granaries, and threatened the inhabitants with famine. He planned an expedition into India ; but, while preparing his troops for that purpose, he was subdued in battle by a general of Gallienus, and afterwards put to death. The jealousy of Rome confined, as we have seen, the governor of Egypt to the rank of a prefect ; but, when the general Theodotus subdued Emilian, the emperor intended, as a reward for his conduct, to invest

him with proconsular powers. He was entreated and persuaded, however, to alter his purpose; for there existed at Rome a general opinion, that Egypt would recover its independence when the emblems of proconsular authority were displayed in its government.*

During these turbulent times the empire was moved from the one end to the other, and a violent sedition threatened to destroy Alexandria. The beaches were strewn with bodies of the dead, and the waters were tinged with the blood of the slain. So perilous was the conjuncture, that there was as much safety in travelling the wildest desert, or crossing the most boisterous sea, as there was in passing through the streets of Alexandria. Not only the capital, but all Egypt and Syria, were in a general state of revolt; and perhaps this was the time when the Bruchium, once the

* Euseb. Hist. eccles. lib. vii, c. 23; Zosimus, lib. ii, de Valeriano; Lucan, lib. viii, v. 824, &c.

glory of Egypt, was destroyed. Pestilence also visited the country ; and the terror of the elements joined issue with other dreadful visitations of Heaven. The sky lowered ; the thunder rolled ; the earth shook ; and the sea burst over its natural bounds.^b

A. D. 268.—When Gallienus had finished his voluptuous and feeble reign Claudius was invested with the imperia purple ; and Egypt readily acknowledged his power. Zenobia, queen of Palmyra, instantly opened her pretensions to Egypt. She urged her claim to the kingdom, because she belonged to the Ptolemean race, and was directly allied to the last Cleopatra. She also laid claim, for her sons, to the eastern part of the Roman empire, because their father Odenatus of Palmyra, had performed essential services to the Roman government, and had been received by the

^b Euseb. Hist. lib. vii, c. 21 ; et Annot. Valesii.

emperor Gallienus as a partner on the throne.

While Claudius was employed in compelling the Scythians to repass the Danube, a party of the Egyptians, disaffected to the emperor, followed Timagines, and took arms in behalf of Zenobia. They were soon joined by forces from Palmyra ; and the army became numerous and formidable. These combined forces having subdued Egypt, Zabdas, the general of Zenobia, left a numerous garrison to retain possession of the country, and, with the remainder of his army, returned to Palmyra. During the time of this invasion and triumph, Probus, the prefect of Egypt, was employed in scouring the neighbouring seas, and clearing them of pirates. But, upon knowing what was done in Egypt, he speedily returned to Alexandria, and drove out the garrison which Zabdas had left. This change of situation drew Zabdas again into Egypt, and he met Probus with his army in

the full current of success. Before this victorious army the troops of Zenobia were obliged to give way; and Probus took possession of the hill of Meattern in Egypt, with a view of cutting off the retreat of Zabdas. But Timagines, who was still in the interests of Zenobia, knowing a convenient path, secretly ascended the hill, and, to the astonishment of Probus, he was unexpectedly assailed by a numerous army of the queen; and the Roman troops were routed with great slaughter.^b

A. D. 270.—The new emperor resolved to subdue Zenobia, who held Egypt in her grasp, and before whom the nations of the east trembled, from the river Euphrates to the metropolis of Galatia. Near the city of Antioch the armies of Aurelian and Zenobia met; but the cavalry of the queen being better equipped and trained than those of

^b Zosim. lib. i, de Zenobia; Antiq. of Palm. ch. 21.

the Romans, stratagem and address were employed to subdue them. At the first onset the horses of Aurelian gave way, and pretended to flee, while the cavalry of Zenobia rushed forward in all the ardour of pursuit. Fatigued by the weight of their armour, and overcome by the heat of the day, they fell an easy prey to the power of the Romans. While Aurelian was waiting for the infantry, which he had left on the opposite side of the Orontes, the soldiers of Palmyra, who had escaped the Romans, arrived at Antioch, where Zabdas displayed a readiness of expedient which secured their safety. Knowing how the people of that city were disposed, and fearing that they should fall upon his army, and destroy them, he exhibited a person who personified Aurelian, and was led in chains through the streets of the city, as if the Romans had been vanquished, and the emperor taken. Thus he deceived the people, and kept them in awe till the arrival of

the night favoured Zenobia, and permitted her in safety to return to Emessa.^c

But she was again attacked by the army of the Romans, and, after a desperate battle, Aurelian remained victorious in the field. Zenobia fled to Emessa; but, leaving it as quickly as possible, she hastened, by rapid marches, and threw herself with her army into the city of Palmyra. From the provisions with which this city was supplied, and the means of defence which it possessed, she considered it as capable of a long and painful siege; and from the situation of the enemy, who were exposed to the scorching sun, in a sandy desert, she supposed they must soon retire: but though they were better supported than might have been conceived, yet Aurelian, on various accounts, proposed a treaty. But the terms were arrogant; and the answer of Zenobia breathed a

^c Zosim. lib. ii, de Aureliano et Zenobia.

noble spirit of heroism and independence.

‘No man hitherto,’ said she, ‘yourself excepted, has ever dared to demand from me what your letters require. The honours of war are to be procured by courage rather than writing; and Cleopatra, my ancestor, preferred death to the subjection and controul of Augustus himself. But my cause is not desperate; every hour is expected to bring upon its wings the cheering assurance that the Persians, the Saracens, and Armenians, have arrived to give me aid. And if the free-booters and flying parties of my country could gall you so severely, on the road from Emessa to Palmyra, how will you stand before my allies and regular troops? When you see them erect their standard, and appear in battle array, you will lose that pride which leads you now to speak as if you were the invincible and the unrivalled lord of the east.’^c

^c Antiquities of Palmyra, in loco.

This speech was honourable to the spirit and fortitude of the queen; but it did not appal the emperor, nor shake his purpose. He intercepted the Persian succours, which Zenobia had expected, and corrupted the other forces on which she relied. Thus the danger became so great that the queen mounted a swift dromedary and fled; but, as friends forsake the unfortunate, and court the rising power, so the flight of Zenobia, though secret, was quickly made known to Aurelian. He pursued her with a party of light horse; and she was overtaken and seized at the critical moment, when, with fear and anxious hope, she was crossing the Euphrates.^c

A. D. 273.--Thus the greatness of Zenobia fell, and thus too the splendour of Palmyra ran into decay. The queen became subject to the power of the Romans, and the proud city fell into ruins. Palmyra, or Tadmor, in the desert, which

^c Zosim. lib. ii, Aurel. et Zenob.

was once the wonder of the world, became desolate and forlorn. A few cottages of mud contain at present the miserable inhabitants, while the magnificent memorials of its ancient grandeur excite wonder, and raise astonishment. On its dust is inscribed 'the uncertainty of grandeur; and its ruins proclaim, that dignity and honours depend upon the tide of chance and time.

Zenobia was possessed of many charms both of body and mind. Her features were regular, her gait was majestic, and the sparkling of her eyes intimated the quickness and vigour of her mind. She had the finest form of the beautiful and elegant women of Syria; and, from the love which she had for learning, she acquired knowledge and encouraged deep research.

Longinus was honoured with her friendship; and, as she admired the religion of the Jews, that acute and sound critic might be led to examine, with greater accuracy, the books of Moses. To that ancient lawgiver he ascribed abilities of

an uncommon cast; he spoke of his mind as stored with the sublimest sentiments of Jehovah; and he specified, as an instance of the true sublime, that simple and beautiful expression of Scripture, which is thus happily conceived,—‘and God said, let there be light, and there was light.’^b

Zenobia was not only elegant and learned, but temperate and chaste. Faithful in the conjugal relation, and animated by a martial spirit, she attended her husband to the field of battle, and, by her councils and heroism, assisted his ascent on the steps of military glory. But the fame of this active and virtuous lady has not escaped the tongue of slander; for she was insidiously accused of having encompassed the death of Herodes, a son of her husband Odenatus, by a former wife. But the deed appears to have been planned, and committed, by Mœonius, a profligate youth,

^b Longinus, Lond. A. D. 1732, 8vo. p. 51.

and a connection at court. Repeatedly, at the chase, had he sprung forward and thrown his javelin first at the beast which was pursued: he was often chid for daring to take the lead, which, by the practice of the country, solely belonged to the first of rank in the field. Persevering in the practice, with the obstinacy of a perverse mind, his uncle Odenatus deprived him of his horse, and cast him into a temporary confinement. The affront rankling deep in his mind, wrought him up into a frenzy of revenge; and he stained that javelin in the blood of Odenatus, and his son Herodes, which he was not permitted to drench at pleasure in that of a beast of the chase.

Reeking with kindred gore, he seized the government and the ensigns of royal power; but Zenobia, lifting up the hand of determined vengeance, hurled him from the height of his blood-stained throne. Her sons being too young for the important trust of the kingdom,

she took the reins of government into her own hand, and firmly guided them with discretion. She knew how to conciliate, and she knew how to punish. At times she laid aside her usual temperance, and joined in the banquet with her generals. It was in this career of wisdom and splendour that she was attacked and overthrown by the emperor Aurelian. When she was besieged in her own city, Palmyra, she vowed that her freedom and her life should perish, or exist together; but in chains, when Longinus and many of her friends were put to death, her firmness expired; and she shrunk from the boisterous threatenings of the merciless soldiers, and took shelter under the gratuitous protection of the imperious Aurelian.

But why load her with blame for declining to imitate her kinswoman Cleopatra, or the Roman spirit of self-destruction? Daringly to cut the thread of life, when calamities abound, may appear in the semblance of courage; but

in truth it is impious cowardice, blended with haughty impatience. Genuine resolution is to bear the ills of life with modest firmness, and to act with dignity amid scenes of misfortune and sorrow. The future condition of Zenobia is not uniformly drawn by historians. Some assert that she refused to eat food, and fell a victim to sorrow; while others maintain, that she spent the remainder of her days in elegance and ease near Tibur, which is now called Trivoli, and was an ancient town of the Sabines, about twenty miles north from Rome. There many of the Romans had their superb villas, and there many of them their favourite abodes. Perhaps this ease and honour were graciously conferred by Aurelian on account of her own merit, and in recollection of the important services, which her husband had done to Rome.

Having considered the fortune and fate of Zenobia, let us now attend more particularly to Egypt, which we shall

find involved in the flames of war. Firmus, or Firmius, who was a native of Syria, and uncommon in strength, as well as stature, had, by traffic with India, acquired a great fortune, and built a superb mansion at Alexandria. He was in the interest of Zenobia, and endeavoured to support her falling power; but when she was conquered by Aurelian, Firmius was proclaimed king of Egypt. He derived assistance and strength from the Blemeyes, who dwelt on the west of the Red sea, toward Ethiopia, and from the Arabs, whose abode was in the east of that gulf; but Aurelian went out against the newly-created king, and marching against Firmius with all the vigour of his character, Egypt was again united to the empire of Rome.

A. D. 275.—Amid the confusions of the state, Probus was invested with the purple, through the interest of Syria, Egypt, and other countries of the east. After various exertions at home, to heal the divisions of the empire, he sent an

army against the Blemey's, who had never been at peace with Rome since the revolt and usurpation of Firmius. They had taken possession of Thebes, Coptos, with other cities, and threatened a further extension of their power; but the emperor brought them into subjection, and sent many of them prisoners to Rome. Having thus been crowned with victory, there ensued a season of peace; but in the regions of the east, disorders soon appeared. S. Julius Saturninus, a man of great worth, and an excellent general, was appointed to command the troops on the eastern frontiers, but was enjoined not to go down into Egypt. This prohibition does not appear to have sprung from a suspicion of any ambitious intention in Saturninus; for Probus treated him with such perfect confidence as was not consistent with any doubt of his fidelity. But the injunction seems rather to have been founded upon the known wish of the Egyptians to become independent, and

the disposition of having a king, which had lately so often and so strongly appeared. But as a prohibition has often the effect of raising irresistible curiosity, so Saturninus disobeyed his orders, and visited Egypt. No sooner was so popular and meritorious a man seen at Alexandria, than, with loud acclamations, he was saluted head of the realm. Struck by a sense of duty to his country, and fearing the effects of an usurped authority, he fled to Palestine, and refused to be a king. But whether he was apprehensive of the resentment of Rome for what had already taken place; whether his ambition had been influenced by the royal honours which were put into his power; or whether the slight taste which he had of sovereign authority had given him a desire for more, we presume not to determine; but he returned to Alexandria, and received the sceptre. Yet still he was apprehensive of danger; and what his fears foreboded soon befel him; for he was overwhelmed by the troops

of Probus, shut up in prison, and finally put to death.

A. D. 284.—Tumult and insubordination still reigned in Egypt, and called for the rigorous exertions of the new emperor, Dioclesian. From the Nile to Mount Atlas, Africa was in commotion; and, during this season of distraction, Lucius Epidius Achilleus claimed the kingdom of Egypt. He is supposed to have been the brother of Zenobia, and to have fled into Egypt, when Aurelian conquered the queen of Palmyra. He was fortified in the city of Alexandria when the Roman troops arrived; but the general of Dioclesian cut off the provisions and water from the city, and Achilleus was overthrown. Alexandria suffered much; but great as its distress was, the cities of Coptos and Busiris suffered more. Wherever the Roman armies went, destruction followed; for they were commanded to pursue the rebels with deep revenge. To oppose the inroads of the Blemey, Dioclesian en-

tered into a treaty with the people of Nubia ; granted them additional territories ; and paid them yearly a sum of gold. To render this agreement more solemn, buildings were erected in the island of Elephantina, which, in token of harmony, were called Philas ; and there sacrifices of peace and unity were annually offered in behalf of Nubia and Rome. When Egypt was again subdued, Dioclesian made arrangements to keep it in subordination, and fixed for the people a regular and proper supply of provisions.^k

^k Zosim. lib. i & 2, de Zenob. Prob. Dioclet. &c.;
and Horat. Turselin epit. lib. iv, c. 35.

BOOK VI.

CHAP. I.

*The eclectic philosophy. . . . The gnostics. . . .
Monks and Recluse. . . . Arius and Athana-
sius. . . . Various commotions in Egypt.*

As Alexandria was peopled at first from the various nations which composed the extensive kingdom of its founder, so the speculative and religious sentiments in the city must have been greatly diversified. The commerce of Alexandria rendered it the centre of riches and fashion; and its celebrated colleges drew literary inquirers from every civilized part of the world. There was not a sentiment of philosophy or religion which prevailed in Greece, in

Chaldea, in Persia, in Palestine, or perhaps even in India, which was not understood and canvassed in the schools of Alexandria.

Many noble ideas were maintained, and many unworthy sentiments were cherished. From the coalition, or partial union, of such different opinions, there sprung up a variety of kindred, but diversified, views. Wise and discerning men saw the folly and the danger of encouraging every wild speculation, and giving countenance to every fanciful idea. Sensible of the valuable effects which proceed from free enquiry, they did not wish to check the ardour of literary pursuit; but they were also sufficiently aware of the vain or pernicious sentiments, which a fanciful mind may bring forth, if permitted to run wild, without assistance and wise direction.

Under these impressions attempts had frequently been made to select from the different systems of philosophy those parts which were most valuable, and to

reject whatever was found to be incorrect or improper. But this difficult task does not appear to have been brought to a conclusion till the time of Ammonius. That distinguished philosopher and christian divine taught the catechetical school of Alexandria, which is supposed to have been instituted by St. Mark, and successively conducted by Athenagoras, Pantænus, Clemens Alexandrinus, Origen, and other men of learning and note.^a

The system which was thus taken from the diversified opinions of the Greek, Oriental, and Egyptian philosophers, was a collection of such heterogeneous materials as defied union or a regular form. It was dignified with the name of the Eclectic Philosophy; but it was rather productive of hurtful consequences than beneficial effects. When

^a It has been doubted whether Athenagoras was the first president of that school. Lardner, edit. Kippis, vol. iii, p. 181.

the principles of christianity attracted notice, the selecting tendency of the philophers induced them to admit into their system certain portions of the christian faith; and the members of the catechetical school of Alexandria, who embraced the eclectic philosophy, blended many of its tenets with the doctrines of the New Testament.

The opinions of Plato, changed and accommodated to the temper of the times, were the predominant sentiments in the eclectic philosophy, and, being incorporated with the doctrines of the gospel, destroyed its simplicity, and obscured, for a season, its heavenly light. To the eclectic school we are therefore to look for many of those opinions and subtile distinctions which pervaded the church in the dark ages, and which, in the progress of knowledge, the force of truth has gradually rejected.

The title of sophist, or the wise man, had formerly been laid aside for the modest appellation of philosopher, or

one who loves wisdom ; but the arrogance of misguided zeal had, in this stage of society, induced a certain sect to assume the name of gnostics, or those who were eminently endued with knowledge. They represented every thing as flowing purely and spiritually from the Deity ; and asserted, that matter and evil were engendered as the streams proceed in their course, and extended without the sphere and plenitude of the divine essence and glory. Akin to those opinions is the good principle of the Manicheans, or the fountain of excellence ; and the evil element, or source of every thing which is vile.^b To the sentiments of the gnostics there appear to be many allusions in the New Testament ; and to the idea of every thing proceeding from God, in the form of emanations, substances, and æons, as maintained by that sect, the apostle Paul seems to have referred, when he enjoins

^b Bruker. Hist. Lipsiæ, 4to, A. D. 1744, vol. iii, p. 330, &c.

the christians not to ‘ give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying.’ To another sentiment of the gnostics he seems also to have had an eye when he thus addressed his spiritual son Timothy,—‘ keep that which is committed to thy trust; avoid profane and vain babbling, and opposition of science, falsely so called.’^a

The degrading sentiments which the gnostics entertained of matter, as being created by, and connected with, the author of evil, encouraged the voluptuous of that sect to vindicate their wicked pursuits, as if it were of no moment in what manner the unhallowed body should be employed. Akin to those ideas appear to have been the sentiments of the Nicolaitans, a lewd and immoral sect, who recommended a community of wives, and are sharply reprovèd in the book of Revelation.^b Upon the

^a 1 Tim. 1 & 4, and ditto 6 & 20.

^b Rev. ch. ii, v. 15.

same principles the more sedate and serious of the gnostics run into an opposite extreme. They despised every corporeal comfort, preferred a life of solitude to society, and voluntarily submitted to deeds of mortification. Such ideas, aided by a warm imagination, diffused over the east a multitude of people, who doomed themselves to live for years with their bodies in a particular attitude; who undertook severe and distant pilgrimages; and who submitted to the most painful severities. This unnatural and extravagant conduct appears to have had its origin in that philosophy of the east which represented the body as the prison and degradation of the soul; and asserted, that the more completely the mind disregarded every thing corporeal, the sooner, and the more effectually, it would be enabled, by devout and steadfast contemplation to re-ascend to God, the fountain of purity and happiness. The same spirit, diversified in its circumstances and views, appears to have

laid the foundation of the various orders of monks and recluse, which prevailed, first about Alexandria, and then diffused themselves into Thebais, Lybia, and all other parts of the christian world.

From the time that the christians became numerous, till Constantine the Great fenced them about, by the legal protection of the state, they were exposed to insults, and frequently suffered persecution. But it was during the reign of Decius, and in the latter end of Dioclesian's imperial career, that they suffered the greatest severities; and Egypt had its full share of the stormy day. The allegorizing and subtile temper of the times led some of the early christians into bewildering views and dangerous sentiments. They forsook the doctrines of the New Testament, and were carried away by vain imaginations. By some, Jesus was considered only as a man, but possessed of such eminent divine powers as fitted him for his office; while others maintained, that the Son and the Holy Spirit existed in the Father, as reason

and activity do in man: and Noetus, who allowed indeed that God was united to the person of Christ, asserted that he suffered with him on the cross. The gnostics maintained, that the divinity was, in appearance, but not in reality, united to the human nature. And thus they indulged a pernicious speculation, in direct opposition to the plain declaration of Scripture, that 'the word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory^a.'

Arius, a presbyter of Alexandria, asserted, in conformity to those innovating opinions, that the Son was created by the Father, as the other works of the universe had been; and thus the foundation was laid of a long and destructive controversy. Whether these sentiments of Arius were aimed at the bishop of Alexandria, or whether they were uttered in course, and without any particular view, it is neither necessary nor

^a John, ch. i, v. 14.

possible to determine; but they were challenged by the primate of Egypt. The opinions of Arius, and the conduct of the bishop, darted, with the rapidity of lightning throughout the whole boundaries of the christian church.

Alarmed by the progress of these opinions, Alexander, who was the primate of Egypt, Lybia, and Pentapolis, summoned first one council, and then another, in both of which Arius was condemned; and from that period no presbyter was allowed to preach at Alexandria.* At first Constantine the Great looked upon the commotions which were thus abroad as the ferment of a day, and was too much engaged in affairs of state to take much interest in the Arian controversy. But, A. D. 325, being rid of a rival by the death of Licinius, he was more at leisure to attend to the church; and, as the tide of religious vio-

* Sozomen Eccles. Hist. fol. lib. i, c. 15, et Socrat. Eccles. Hist. fol. lib. i, c. 5, et lib. v, c. 25.

lence continued to swell, he assembled a council to meet at Nice in Bithynia.

It appears to have been attended by a vast concourse of clergy, who sat in consultation for more than two months; but the bishops, who properly composed the assembly, did not exceed 318. The emperor, who favoured the bishop of Alexandria, attended the council with much anxiety; and the opinions of Arius were condemned. Christ was declared to be begotten, not made, and of the same substance with the Father. The latter part of this decision laid the foundation of another controversy, and violently was it agitated, whether Christ was of the same, or only of a substance similar to that of the Deity? In the course of a few years Constantine the Great changed his sentiments, or at least acted with greater moderation, and gave orders that Arius should be restored to the communion and protection of the church. But Athenasius, who was only a deacon at the council of Nice, was

now bishop of Alexandria ; and, having refused to obey the command of Constantine, he was persecuted and deposed.

Upon the death of Constantine, the empire was divided between his two sons, Constans and Constantius. The former reigned in the west, was a friend of the Nicean creed, and protected Athanasius. The latter had the provinces of his government in the east, and was friendly to the Arians. While Constans lived, the zeal of Constantius was somewhat moderated ; but when the former was cut off by death, and the latter had become sole master of the Roman empire, Athanasius was condemned by the councils of Arles and Milan. Many fruitless efforts were made to obey the decisions of the church, and to remove Athanasius from his see. When the popular influence still pre-

^r Euseb. de vit. Const. et Vales. annot. in c. 8, hist. Eusebii, folio.

vailed, and retained the bishop in Alexandria. Constantius commanded the civil power of Egypt to exert their authority, and send him into banishment. The partisans of Athanasius refusing to obey the verbal order of the emperor, troops were collected at Alexandria, and put in hostile array.

At the time when these agents of power unexpectedly arrived, Athanasius and his congregation were assembled in the church of S^t. Theonas, and performing their evening devotions. Suddenly the doors of the sacred place were burst open, and the arrows of destruction flew rapidly in every direction. The din of arms filled the temple; sudden fear shook every frame; and the blood of the innocent polluted the hallowed place. Aided by the darkness of the night, and the confusion of the scene, Athanasius escaped, and fled into the deserts of Thebais.^b

^b Socrat. lib. ii, c. 10; and Zosim. lib. ii, de Const. & Constantio.

A. D. 341.—When Athanasius was condemned by the council of Antioch, Eusebius, of Emessa, was appointed to the see of Alexandria; but, knowing the high estimation in which Athanasius was held by his people, Eusebius refused to accept, and Gregory was nominated in his stead. The new-elected bishop was conducted to Alexandria by a guard of 5,000 soldiers, and yet upon his approaching the city he met with resistance. In some future commotion of the city, Gregory, being hated by the Arians, was put to death, and George of Cappadocia was chosen in his place. But the new bishop retired from Alexandria at the desire of the emperor Constantius, when Athanasius, for the second time, was restored to his see.^c

Still parties ran so high at Alexandria, and throughout the whole empire of Rome, that Athanasius was again driven

^c Socrat. lib. ii, c. 18; Sozomen, lib. iii, c. 20; Theodoret. fol. lib. ii, c. 12; and Philostorg, fol. lib. iii, c. 12.

from his see. George, the favourite of the emperor, and of the Arians, was again admitted to the cathedral chair of Alexandria; but the day of his admission brought an increase of sorrow to the people of Egypt. He committed such shameful acts of oppression and cruelty, that the people scarcely restrained their fury, during the life of his patron Constantius; and, upon the emperor's death, they burst out into signal acts of revenge. The bishop, and some of his most guilty associates, were put to death, and dragged through the city, then burnt, and their ashes cast into the sea.^h

Upon this event, Athanasius once again returned to Alexandria, and his return was attended with such circumstances of triumph, that his power at home, and in the churches, was greater than ever it had been; but he did not permit his triumph to excite presump-

^h Philostorg, lib. vii, c. 2.

tion, nor produce violence. Unlike the conduct of George, his powers were exercised with prudence and moderation; but, though we acknowledge and praise his discretion, yet his prudence might in part be owing to the precarious tenure by which he held his honours and his station. It is in the full tide of prosperity and power, when the hand may do what the heart desires, that we are to look for the most unequivocal displays of wisdom and moderation. Precarious indeed was the power of Athanasius, for scarcely was he replaced in the episcopal authority, when the emperor Julian, who had forsaken the christian cause, and become friendly to polytheism, ordered Athanasius to be removed from his dignity.

But the menacing attitude of a spirited and powerful people deterred the civil authorities from taking decided measures against the highly respected bishop. Athanasius, however, not deeming it prudent to stay, in opposition to

the powerful, though suspended, measures of government, privately withdrew from Alexandria, and retired into Upper Egypt. After various changes of fortune, the emperor Valens, though he did not restore him to his see, yet permitted him to appear in public; and, after having been forty-six years a bishop, twenty of which he spent, at different times, in banishment, the venerable Athanasius died among his friends, and closed his eyes in peace.^a

^a Sozomen, lib. vi, c. 19, &c.; Socrat. lib. iv, c. 20, &c. et Annal. Baronii, folio, A. D. 372.

CHAP. II.

The principles of Athanasius prevailed still in Egypt. . . . A. D. 388, the christian religion was formally declared at Rome to be the religion of the state. . . . Violent commotions in Alexandria upon destroying the heathen temples. . . . Of Cyril and Hypatia. . . . Contentions between Cyril and Nestorius. . . . The first and second council of Ephesus. . . . That of Chalcedon. . . . Violent agitations at Alexandria on account of their bishops, and the decisions of the church. . . . Fruitless attempts made to promote unanimity in religious opinions. . . . The monophysite system prevailed in Egypt. . . . The Greek and Roman churches separated.

A. D. 379. **D**URING the latter part of the reign of Valens, various changes of bishops took place in the see of Alexandria. Theodosius the Great rose to the empire of the east, the avowed friend of the Nicean creed, and, A. D. 381, he

called a council at Constantinople, where the decisions of the council of Nice were acknowledged and ratified. It appears that the principles of Athanasius had prevailed in Egypt after his decease; for we find Timothy, bishop of Alexandria, sitting as president in the council which Theodosius summoned to Constantinople. The opinions of Athanasius were counteracted in Egypt by the influence of the Arian emperors. But when Theodosius sat upon the imperial throne, and supported the decisions of Nice, the restrained sentiments of Egypt found their proper level, and the opinions of Athanasius were triumphant.^b

In the time of Constantine, polytheism was checked in its progress, and, excepting in the reign of Julian, who encouraged its growth, it continued to meet with considerable opposition. In the senate of Rome, A. D. 388, the emper-

^b Sozomen, lib. vii, c. 9; et Theodoret. lib. iv, c. 20, &c.

or Theodosius hazarded the important and alarming question, whether polytheism or christianity was to be declared the religion of the state. The progress of christianity had been greater in the eastern parts of the empire than in those of the west, and, among the members of the senate, the friends of idolatry were most numerous, but the presence of a christian emperor overawed them, and the few who had courage to express their opinion, were outvoted and overpowered by the numbers of those who declared for the christian cause.

Before the prevalent power of Theodosius the priests and partizans of idolatry trembled and fled, but the panic which was struck by the resolution of the Roman senate, might have been only a temporary obedience to the will of the sovereign, if decisive measures had not been taken to complete the change. Thenceforward no sacrifice was to be offered upon the altars of idolatry ; and,

to render the command effectual, the allurements to idol worship were taken away. An imperial mandate was speedily conveyed through the whole provinces of the Roman empire, that the temples of the heathen gods should be utterly destroyed; and scarcely a monument was left of the numerous and stately buildings which the devotion of many ages had anxiously reared.^c

In Egypt the greatest reluctance was shewn to comply with the command of Theodosius; and Alexandria, still fretting at the government of a distant and foreign prince, exhibited strong symptoms of discontentment and rebellion. It appears, indeed, as if the expiring breath of idolatry had roused the people of Alexandria to express the parting pang by a violent throe of fury and revenge. Theophilus, who had succeeded Timothy in the bishopric of Alexandria, displayed an injudicious rashness, rather than a

^c Theodoret, lib. v, c. 21.

spirit of prudence and moderation. In destroying a temple of Bacchus, there were found in the mysterious recess, and among the objects of religious worship, symbols of an obscene and profligate kind. To make idolatry more detested, and to gain a signal triumph over the fallen superstition, Theophilus gave orders that the lewd emblems should be exposed to open view, and held up to derision. The heathen multitude, stung with reproaches, and mad with rage, flew to arms, and many on both sides were unfortunately slain.

The enraged multitude were encouraged in their violence by the philosopher Olympius; and they posted themselves in the temple of Serapis, which served them for a fortress. Within were a variety of vaults and passages, without there was a range of porticoes; and among these they fortified themselves with considerable strength. From this station they annoyed the enemy, often made desperate sallies, and covered the

precincts with the slain. With much difficulty a truce was obtained till the pleasure of the emperor should be known. With anxious expectation did the parties wait till the fleet messenger had time to return. At length the royal mandate arrived; and, in a mixed assembly, every ear was open, and every heart fluttered with mingled emotions of fear and hope. The rescript was opened; the contents were announced; and the mandate bore, that the heathen temples should be utterly destroyed.

So elated were the christians, and so depressed and fearful were the friends of idolatry, that the latter slunk away in haste, and not even the assurance of royal protection could inspire them with confidence to stay. The temple of Serapis was peculiarly an object of destruction. Strong and massy were its walls; but rage and perseverance overcame their strength. Gradually the secret recess was flung open, and the statue of

the god was exposed to view. Serapis was so far famed, and so great was supposed to be the extent of his power, that in his presence destruction itself stood appalled, and fear arrested the hand that was lifted up to smite him. Tradition maintained, that when Serapis should be insulted, the world itself would be dissolved ; but a soldier, more hardy than the rest, rushed through the phalanx of trembling spectators, and, with his battle-axe struck the head of the tremendous god. The statue fell ; no judgment ensued ; and the terrors of the people were removed. Success inspired courage, and impunity dispelled fear. The statue was broken into pieces ; the valuable metals of the holy place were formed into vessels for the churches of Alexandria ; and the less valuable parts were dragged in contempt through the streets of the city. Many valuable ruins of the temples were applied to purposes of charity ; and, in the whole Roman

empire, the pagan worship sunk into disuse.^d

In the decline of literature, when the light of science shed but its setting rays, vitiated taste and false criticism appeared. In this situation of knowledge, the bold and metaphorical language of the Scriptures was taken in a literal sense, and God was conceived as seeing with eyes and hearing with ears. Theophilus, the bishop of Alexandria, combated those opinions in a pastoral letter, and shewed the folly, as well as the impiety, of so gross an idea. The sentiments prevailed chiefly among the monks of Egypt; and, being enraged at the conduct of Theophilus, they charged him with supporting the opinions of Origen, who favoured the allegorical interpretation of Scripture.

During these misunderstandings in Egypt, some youths who differed in sen-

^d Socrat. lib. v, c. 16; Theodoret, lib. v, c. 22; Sozomen, lib. vii, c. 15; et Macrob. Saturnal. lib. i, c. 20.

timent from the bishop of Alexandria, fled to Constantinople, and were protected by Chrysostom, the patriarch of that see. On various matters of dispute, which are not clearly related, various councils were held, and Chrysostom was sent into banishment. If we may form an opinion from the obscure records of those transactions, it would appear that Theophilus, bishop of Alexandria, satisfied the powerful monks with respect to the soundness of his faith, and that Chrysostom was found guilty, as he gave countenance to the discontented party who fled from Alexandria, for differing in sentiment from their bishop and head.*

Cyril, the brother's son of Theophilus, was educated by his uncle; and, in the rising career of ecclesiastical power, was inspired with the highest notions of clerical preferment. He spent five years among the monks of Nitria, and, when

* Socrat. lib. vi, c. 7; Sozomen. lib. viii, c. 11 & 28.

but a youth, he was taken from that retirement, and introduced by Theophilus into the public scenes of the church. His person was comely; his voice full; the tones harmonious; and his action graceful. Indued with these qualifications, and zealous in his profession, he was an eloquent and popular preacher. Upon the death of Theophilus, Cyril, and the archdeacon Timothy, stood candidates for the vacant see; and, though the latter was supported by the army, yet Cyril, being the favourite of the people, was placed on the episcopal throne.

He began his spiritual government in a proud strain of authority. The powers of the Egyptian see, which, in a rich, distant, and popular province, had long been acquiring strength, now overleapt the ecclesiastical bounds, and occasionally interfered with the civil authority. Cyril was invested by Celestine, the Roman pontiff, with the title of his vicar; but, previous to this, the bishops of Egypt

were honoured with a higher title. Cyril was the twenty-fourth bishop of Alexandria; but Heraclas, the twelfth or thirteenth, established in Egypt twenty villages, or smaller bishoprics. The people, and the bishops who were his suffragans, called him Aba, *i. e.* Father; and, in course of time, he was called, by way of eminence, Baba, or Papa, which signify grandfather. Other churches followed this example, or, by corresponding circumstances, were led to a similar conduct; and, by a variety of concurring circumstances, the bishop of Rome was eminently denominated Pope, and with that name acquired exorbitant power.^f

Tyranny never fails to produce foes; and the violence of Cyril surrounded him with enemies. Upon a time of public entertainment, when a vast multi-

^f Eutychii Annal. Pat. Alex. p. 356, &c. edit. Pocock, Oxon, A. D. 1659; Renaudotii Hist. Pat. Alex. p. 28, &c.; Parisiis, A. D. 1713; Valesii Annot. in Evagrium, lib. i, c. 4; et M. D'Herbelot Bibliothéque Oriental, mot, Baba.

tude of people were assembled in the theatre of Alexandria, a tumult and bloody riot ensued. The Jews were found to have been the principal actors in this scene of disorder, and having been threatened, as well as reproved, by Cyril, they vowed a time of revenge. To fulfil their determination, a general cry was raised that a church in the city was on fire. The christians ran with avidity to extinguish the flames; but they found themselves betrayed by a false alarm; and many of them were wilfully put to death.

On the morning of the following day, Cyril, armed with wrath, and attended by a numerous band of friends, went out against the Jews, drove them with much havoc out of the city, and destroyed their synagogues. Respecting this transaction, he neither had consulted Orestes, the prefect of Egypt, nor had he any permission from the emperor. Orestes being aggrieved by the encroachments, and enraged at the supercilious

conduct, of the bishop, complained to the emperor. Cyril, on his part, presented a statement of the proceedings, and vindicated his conduct ; but nothing decisive was done by the court. Unsupported by the listless or timid conduct of the emperor, Orestes was insulted by his enemies, and in danger from their violence. The enmity which subsisted between the factions continued to swell ; and the party of Cyril grew every day more daring and outrageous.

The monks of the adjoining desert rushed into Alexandria, and meeting the prefect in his carriage, they assaulted and beat him till he was covered with blood. The soldiers and citizens flew to his assistance ; the monks were routed ; and Ammonius, one of their number, was killed in the tumult. Cyril, as bishop of a religion whose doctrines are peace, ought to have shewn his high displeasure at an outrage so violent ; but, instead of a temper and conduct so suitable to his

Station, Ammonius, by command of the patriarch, was carried in solemn procession, and buried with all the solemnities of a martyr.^s

But those scenes of cruelty were not yet finished ; there was still another spot to be added to the stained character of Cyril ; still there was another act of darkness and of death to be performed. Hypatia, the daughter of Theon, a celebrated mathematician of Alexandria, was instructed by her father with tenderness and care. Her aptness to learn, her progress in education, and her desire of knowledge, procured her every assistance which Alexandria and the learning of those times could afford. In polite literature and knowledge of philosophy, she was excelled by none, and rivalled by few. She was induced, by intreaties and persuasion, not to withhold her talents from the world, but to open the treasure of her acquirements

^s Socrat. lib. vii, c. 7, 13, & 14.

for the benefit of others. Though the same depth of understanding and solidity of judgment which enabled her to become such a proficient in knowledge, had also saved her from that degree of vanity and ostentation which admiration so universal would have raised in more frivolous minds, yet she was persuaded to vanquish her reserve, as well as her love of retirement, and to become a teacher in the schools of Alexandria. Her beauty, her virtues, her chastity, her uncommon acquirements, and the peculiar circumstances of her situation, drew many to her school, and made her house the centre of elegance and learning.^h

But the shield of virtue and excellence was not sufficient to defend her from malice and misguided zeal. She was the friend of Orestes; and, having sometimes conversed with the prefect during the contention between him and Cyril, she was unjustly accused of pre-

^h Suidas in titul. Ὑπατία.

venting a mutual and friendly agreement. The public mind being yet in a state of great irritation, the multitude were easily moved. They attacked Hypatia as she was passing through the streets of Alexandria, tore her garments, hurried her into the Cæsarian church, and there put her to death. With savage barbarity they tore her, limb from limb; and, while the members of her body were yet quivering with the exertions of half extinguished life, they were cast into the flames, and consumed. The church where she was murdered was called the Cæsarian, because the building was dedicated, and perhaps erected, by Cleopatra, in honour of Julius Cæsar. It had afterwards been set apart as a temple to Saturn: it was employed as a gymnasium and palace for the emperor Adrian: it was then converted into a christian church; and was afterwards the last scenes of Hypatia's sufferings. These events happened in the fourth year of Cyril's ecclesiastical dignity, in

the fifth of the reign of Theodosius II, and in the 414th year of the Christian era.ⁱ

The violence and ambition of Cyril have been clearly seen; and the same tendency toward power produced a violent contest between him and the bishop of Constantinople. The patriarch of Alexandria had acquired power which was almost absolute; but all this availed him nothing while his rival at Constantinople exceeded him in influence and outshone him in splendour. The see of Alexandria, by its antiquity and importance, was high in the scale of rank, and next in order to that of Rome; but the diocese of Constantinople, the eastern seat of government, was extending its influence and making encroachments on the adjoining sees.

Under the immediate smile of courtly favour, the Byzantine diocese was

ⁱ Socrat. lib. vii, c. 15; Philostorg. lib. viii, c. 9; Eutych. Annal. vol. i, p. 300; et Vales. Annot. in Evag. lib. ii, c. 8.

rising in fame, and commanding respect. For more than twenty years, from the time that Chrysostom was deposed, till the death of Sisinnius, the church of Constantinople had never been satisfied nor at rest, and therefore, in paternal kindness to the see, and under the highest expectations from the character of Nestorius, a monk of Antioch, the emperor invited him to the cathedral seat. He commenced the superintendence of his diocese by persecuting the Arians; and he displayed a spirit of bigotry toward those who neglected or refused to keep the feast of Easter at the time which was prescribed by authority. Thus, by pursuing rigorous measures, he incurred much hatred, and met with disapprobation.

The bishop of Alexandria saw those proceedings with secret delight, for he meditated the fall of Nestorius, and intended, upon his ruins, to raise himself. As if Cyril had directed the movements of fortune, Nestorius fell into such a

snare as the bishop of Alexandria could have desired. Vindicating some expressions which had been uttered by one of his clergy in the church of Constantinople, Nestorius reprobated a form of speech which was then beginning to prevail, by which Mary, the mother of Jesus, was denominated the mother of God. Nestorius had drunk deep at the streams of the eastern school, and held the distinction between the divine and human nature of Jesus; while Cyril, at the fountains of Alexandria, was tinctured with the doctrines of Apollinaris, who asserted, that the logos supplied the place of the rational soul, and that in Christ there was but one nature.^k

Upon this subject a correspondence ensued between Cyril and Nestorius. John of Antioch was drawn into the controversy; and even Celestine, bishop of Rome, though without the precincts of the eastern church, was applied to

^k Socrat. lib. vii, c. 29.

for council and direction. The appeal was received with pleasure in the Vatican; for the bishop of Rome was struggling to acquire a superiority, and establish a decisive influence in the christian church. Having called a synod, the clergy decided in favour of the Alexandrian bishop; and Cyril received a similar support from the meeting of divines which he had called in Egypt. Nestorius, however, shewed no regard to the voice of the Vatican, nor the decisions of Alexandria. But the emperor of Constantinople was persuaded to call a council; and Ephesus, being of easy access, was fixed upon for the place of assembling.¹

A. D. 431.—Nestorius was punctual at the place of meeting, and Cyril hastened thither with a numerous train of attendants. Secure of a great number of votes, the patriarch of Alexandria was impatient for the hour of trial; but John,

¹ Socrat. lib. vii, c. 29, 31, 32; et Evag. lib. i, c. 2.

bishop of Antioch, had not yet arrived, yet was approaching, though by slow movements, on a long and painful journey. Sixteen days after the appointed time, Cyril opened the assembly, and his waiting so long had an appearance of impartiality, as well as of patience, though he was secretly anxious to have the trial brought to issue before John of Antioch arrived. Cyril himself took the chair; but Nestorius protested against the proceedings, and would not attend the council. The imperial delegate prayed for a short delay; but Cyril had too much at stake to alter his purpose. The cause was immediately considered; the bishop of Constantinople was deprived of his office, and degraded as a heretic. Five days after this decision, the metropolitan of Antioch arrived, and, finding what was done, he shook the dust off his feet in testimony of disapprobation; and, without taking a night's repose, he and his clergy opened a synod, disannulled every thing which Cyril had

done, and the bishop of Alexandria, together with the bishop of Ephesus, were both deposed.^m

Though the emperor was friendly to Nestorius, yet, by the influence of his sister Pulcheria, and the persuasion of his courtiers, he abandoned him to the violence of his enemies. So versatile are opinions, so changeable the tempers of men, and so various the circumstances which influence their conduct, that we are scarcely surprised when we find Nestorius forsaken also by John of Antioch. He first retired to a monastery, where he had formerly been a monk, but was afterwards sent into Arabia Petrea, and then banished to the greater Oasis of Egypt. In the course of time, the Blemey, in some of their hostile incursions, set him and his companions free from captivity ; and, having outlived his enemies, he died after a banishment of sixteen years. The Nestorians

^m Eutych. Annal. vol. ii, p. 7 & 8.

retired into the east ; were prevalent in Persia ; reached the Caspian sea ; and are said to have been found in China and various districts of India.ⁿ

A. D. 448.—Eutyches was accused of heresy ; and a council met at Constantinople to judge of his opinions. Like Cyril and others, he maintained the union of the divine and human nature ; but he also asserted, that the latter was absorbed in the former, whereas the Monophysites generally maintained, that the union of the two natures did not destroy or confound the properties of either. He was immediately deposed by the council ; but he complained of their proceedings to the emperor Theodosius ; and a more general council was assembled at Ephesus to review the matter in dispute.^o

Dioscorus, who, upon the death of Cyril, succeeded to the see of Alexandria, was appointed president of the

ⁿ Socrat. lib. vii, c. 34 ; et Evagr. lib. i, c. 4, &c.

^o Evagr. lib. i, c. 9 & 10 ; et lib. ii, c. 2, 4, & 18.

council. Much unbecoming violence appeared in the assembly ; Eutyches was acquitted, and many of his enemies were deposed. Leo, bishop of Rome, felt indignant at these proceedings ; and, in the meantime, the Monophysite emperor, Theodosius, having died, another council was called ; and, being dignified with the name of Universal, it met in the year 451 at Chalcedon. The opinions of Nestorius and Eutyches were both condemned, and Dioscorus, the bishop of Alexandria, was deposed. The decisions of the former universal councils were recognized ; and the doctrine of the trinity, being divested of every thing extraneous, was reduced to that true and genuine form which it now bears in the orthodox creeds of christian churches. It gradually recovered this shape in passing through the decisions of the four ecumenical or universal councils, in that of Nice, A. D. 325, Jesus was declared to be of the same substance as the Father ; in that of Constantinople, A. D. 381, the Father, the Son, and the Holy

Ghost, were pronounced to be equal in power and glory ; in that of Ephesus, A. D. 431, it was asserted that the two natures of Christ constituted but one person ; and in that of Chalcedon, A. D. 451, it was declared that the divine and human nature of Christ continue to be two, without mixture or confusion, though they are intimately connected by a hypostatical or personal union.

Dioscorus was banished to Gangra in Paphlagonia ; and the people of Alexandria, being enraged at this treatment of their bishop, rose in arms against his successor Proterius. At first they repulsed the soldiers who were sent to place him upon the throne, but at length were overpowered, upon the arrival of additional troops. The auxiliary forces were but newly levied ; and, being unaccustomed to military authority, as well as irritated at the people of Alexandria, they broke down the fences of order, and indulged a licentious spirit. The whole city was in an uproar, till Florus, the

prefect, restored quietness and submission; but afterwards they rose up against Proterius and put him to death.^p

To heal the divisions of the church, the emperor Zeno published the *henoticon*, in which he attempted, by cautious and moderate expressions, to produce mutual forbearance, if not an agreement, between the Nestorians and the friends of the Nicean faith; but the attempt was attended by no beneficial effects. The doctrine of two natures in Christ necessarily produced the opinion of two wills; but this was also productive of divisions and violence. Early in the seventh century, the emperor Heraclius attempted to reconcile the contending parties, by admitting two natures in Jesus Christ, but only one will. Though he was joined in these sentiments by the bishops of Rome and Constantinople, together with various other persons of distinction, yet they were

^p Baron. Annal. A. D. 450, 451, & 452.

productive of nothing but confusion and strife. As a better expedient, he published the ecthesis, or explanation; and every controversy on these subjects was forbidden. This method not having been effectual, his grandson, Constans, published the type, or an edict of silence; but it, like the former, failed of the end for which it was designed. The fire of controversy, therefore, which had been smothered for a while, by imperial management, burst out with redoubled violence.^a

During all this time, the opinion of Jesus having only one nature continued to prevail in Egypt. The sentiments of Eutyches, and those which were maintained by Cyril, were different; for, though the latter admitted only one nature in Christ, yet he did not allow that either of them was lost, but so intimately connected and combined, as to constitute only one, without altering their

^a Evagr. lib. ii, c. 5, &c.; et lib. iii, c. 13, &c.

essence; whereas the former maintained, that the human nature was converted into the divine.

The sees of Rome, Alexandria, Antioch, and Constantinople, were ranked in dignity according to the order in which they have now been mentioned; but, in the council of Chalcedon, the imperial influence placed the see of Constantinople next in order to that of Rome. Leo, the bishop of the latter diocese, was offended at the change, and remonstrated against the innovation; but the power of the emperor prevailed, and Constantinople took its new place.

It is not fully ascertained whether the Monophysites of Egypt were most inclined to the opinions of Cyril or Eutyches, though it is most probable that those of Cyril prevailed. When the emperors of Constantinople began, in general, to defend the Chalcedon faith, the Monophysites of Egypt were discouraged and oppressed. In this situation, an obscure monk, Jacobus Baradeus Zanzalus,

stept forward as their champion. Having been consecrated by a few persecuted bishops, and appointed to the see of Edessa, he recruited, with zeal, the decayed strength of his party. From him the Monophysites are generally known by the name of Jacobites, and were numerous in Egypt, Syria, and Ethiopia. Oppressed by the imperial power, the Egyptians maintained their religious sentiments, and supported a patriarch of their own persuasion, when the see of Alexandria and the emoluments of the church were given to the opposite party. Those clergy who were supported by the court were denominated Melchites, as descriptive of the royal favour. The great body of the Egyptian people, who adhered to the Monophysite faith, were ill affected to the imperial authority. They even abandoned the language of Greece; cultivated that of Egypt; and refused either to think or speak in the same manner as their oppressors did. In short, they were ready to receive

other masters; and they had soon an opportunity of shaking off the Roman yoke. But the friends of the council of Chalcedon were not harmonious amongst themselves; and the jealous ambition between the patriarchs of Rome and Constantinople continued to appear, in diversified forms, till, toward the end of the ninth century, the Greek and Latin churches were completely separated.^r

^r Abulpharag. 4to, edit. Pocock Oxon. A. D. 1663, p. 93 & 94; et Eutych. Annal, vol. ii, p. 144.

BOOK VII.

CHAP. I.

The decline of the Roman empire, and the appearance of Mohammed. . . . The extension of his empire after his death. . . . Abubeker. . . . Omar. . . . Egypt subdued. . . . Othman. . . . Ali. . . . The disputes with Moa-neiah, &c. during his reign. . . . The Om-miades. . . . Conquest of Africa and Spain.

THE seeds of corruption and decay, which are inherent in every constitution, had long been actively employed in producing the slow, but certain, dissolution of the Roman empire. Amid ambition, luxury, and profusion, the enfeebling effects of dissipation and vice were severely felt. For several ages Rome was not, in virtue and eminence, what it had been, and its strength, as well as its glory, were passing away.

The division which was made of the empire, among the sons of Theodosius the Great, considerably impaired its remaining strength, and hastened its downfall.

The Huns and Goths, the Vandals, and other uncultivated nations, envied the soil, the climate, and the wealth, of the Roman empire. The weak state of the nation invited their intrusions; and the armies of those powerful tribes pursued a victorious course into the best departments of the empire. After a diversity of changes and fortune, the western empire fell. As if Augustulus, the diminutive name of the apparent heir, had been descriptive of the vanished glory of the Augustan throne, the remaining power of Rome passed away from him into the possession of Odoacer, king of the Heruli; and, instead of an emperor of Rome, there was then but a king of Italy.^a

^a Evagr. Hist. lib. ii, c. 16.

The eastern empire remained undestroyed; but it was shaken to the foundation; and its various parts were at length torn asunder. While Heraclius held the sceptre of Constantinople, Chosroes, king of Persia, subdued the land of Palestine, took Jerusalem, which was in the power of the Romans, and carried home, in triumph, the patriarch Zacharias, and the relict of the cross of Jesus. The queen of Persia, being a christian, delivered the patriarch from captivity, and superstitiously regarded the real, or feigned relict of the cross. A. D. 616, from Memphis to Ethiopia the victorious banner of Persia was waving. Egypt, and particularly Alexandria, might have been protected by the military and naval strength of the country; but the prefect, as well as the patriarch, fled, and took refuge in Cyprus. Meeting with little resistance, the troops of Chosroes erected their standard on the walls of the African Tripoli; and, without molestation, they returned through

the deserts of Lybia. Heraclius was a man of courage and resource, but was at times indolent and misled; yet he was now roused to action; and, upon the plain where Nineveh once stood, he gained a complete victory over the Persian arms. Chosroes, in his flight, suffered death. His son and successor Siroes restored the Grecian conquests; and Egypt was once more in the possession of Constantinople.^a

A. D. 614.—About this time Mahomet, or Mahommed, made his appearance upon the theatre of public life. He was descended from the Coreish, which was the most noble Arabian tribe. The most ancient and unmixed race of that nation appears to have been lost in the tide of time, though one class of the Arabs is still denominated genuine, and the other ingrafted, or the descendants of Ishmael. The Arabs are sup-

^a Abulpharag. p. 98, 99; D'Herbelot. titre, Khosrouet; Baron. Annal. A. D. 614, 615, 616.

posed to have been called Saracens, from Arra, the ancient capital of their nation; or from a Greek word which signifies empty; because Sarah sent Hager, the mother of Ishmael, away unprovided from Abraham's house; or from the Arabic word, which means, he privately took away; alluding to Ishmael's living upon plunder; or perhaps, with more probability, from the word in the Arabic language, which signifies people of the east.^a From the earliest history of that people, the Arabs appear to have been divided into those who, dwelling in cities and towns, were merchants and artificers; and into those wandering tribes who lodged under tents, as the Beduin Arabs still do, and were supported chiefly by plunder and feeding cattle.

To the tribes who lived in fixed ha-

^a Pocock. spec. Hist. Arab. p. 33, 34; et Univ. Hist. vol. xvii, p. 568, 594, &c.; et Chronicon Orientale, folio, Parisiis, A. D. 1651, p. 164, 165.

bitations, Mahommed belonged; but his parents having died while he was but a youth, he was cast unprovided upon the care of his relations, and was chiefly brought up by his paternal uncle Abu Taleb. Early in life he was employed in the business of merchandize; and, at the age of 25 years, entered into the service of the widow Cadijah, who afterwards became his wife. By this marriage he was placed in competent, or rather easy, circumstances; and continued to enjoy the happiness of a private and respectable station till the fortieth year of his age. Like the rest of the Arabs of that period he was illiterate; but in the intercourse, which, by traffic he had with the world, he improved his discernment, and acquired the art of making useful observations. Notwithstanding some ideas which have been suggested to the contrary, the Arabs, at the appearance of Mahommed, were sunk in ignorance. In early ages, when the east was splendid with learning, that

people, with their neighbours, must have enjoyed its blessings; but in the thick darkness which over-clouded the nations, the Arabs also were involved; and nothing of literary value appears in their history, but productions of the rural muse, which abound in the pastoral state. The idolatry of the Arabs appeared to him in its native baseness, and the jarring absurdities, which misguided zeal had mixed with the pure religion of Jesus, prevented him from viewing it with a favourable eye.^c

He was much given to retirement, and often engaged in deep contemplation. His ardent mind might be persuaded, by the visionary influence of seclusion and overstrained thoughtfulness, that he was vested with a mission from God; and he pretended to reveal the secrets of Heaven. His countenance was expressive, his person graceful, and his appearance majestic. He spoke the purest

^c Chronicon. Orientale, p. 161, 162, &c.

Arabian dialect; and, though he was often silent, yet, in his set harangues, his speech flowed in the most copious and dignified strains of Arabian eloquence.

To correct the errors of false religion, he declared, as the Jews and Christians had done, that there is only one God; but it was added, to aggrandise himself, that Mahommed was his prophet. Simple in his manners, he assumed no state; and abstemious in his diet, he seldom indulged in milk or honey, which he greatly preferred; but his common fare was barley bread, or dates and water. Wine, which had sometimes been forbidden in the east, he neither drank himself, nor permitted to his followers. In conformity to the eastern manners, he allowed a plurality of wives; but, to set bounds to the practice, he confined them to four, including concubines. Licentious as he was himself in his intercourse with women, he stated the felicity of paradise as participating of the enjoyments which were

much desired on earth. He represented all things as bound fast in the arrangements of fate ; and thus he prepared a people ready to obey his commands.

In his prophetical pretensions, he was opposed by the Coreish ; and, in the company of his friend Abubeker, he fled from Mecca, and, after many dangers, arrived at Medina. The resistance which he was compelled to make against the enmity of his own family connections, and the success with which he vanquished his foes, suggested to him, perhaps for the first time, the expedient of extending his fame and his power by the edge of the sword. All Arabia bowed before him ; and he had begun a successful career against the Romans, when his progress was arrested by the hand of death.

The successors of Mahommed, upon the Moslem throne, enlarged the empire which he had formed, and extended it over Persia, Chaldea, Syria, and Egypt.

The western parts of Africa too, as well as Spain, were over-run by Arabian conquerors. From the misfortunes and death of Crassus, a Roman general, in Parthia, till the period at which we have now arrived, comprehending a space of almost 700 years, the empires of Rome and Persia had never been in friendship. Lately they had violently shaken one another's strength, and were both ready to become a prey to any powerful invader. If one, or both, of those countries had abode in full strength, the empire of Mahommed could never have been formed; but he erected his throne upon the weakness of the surrounding states, and its future greatness rose, as they decayed. But the conquests of the Saracens must not be wholly ascribed to the weak and disjointed state of the neighbouring nations; for they were partly owing to the enthusiastic spirit which pervaded the armies of the prophet. They fought, as they conceived,

in the cause of religion ; and to die in battle was to secure a future reward.

A. D. 632.—Mahommed having died without appointing a successor, the trial of strength, among the candidates for the throne, threatened serious and numerous evils to the state. But, with less trouble than was expected, Abubeker,^a the father-in-law, and much respected friend, of the prophet, was appointed caliph, vicar, or successor of Mahommed. Upon the death of the prophet, when the terror of his power was taken away, many of the Arabs returned to the idolatry of their fathers. To bring them back to duty and obedience, Abubeker employed the celebrated General Caled, who, for his skill in conquest, and his zeal in the hour of success, was impiously denominated the sword of God. Having brought Arabia into sub-

^a His name was Abdallah ; but, when his daughter Ayesha was married to Mahommed, he was surnamed Abubeker, or the father of the damsel.

jection, he turned his arms, with effect, against Irac, and the Greeks; but the caliph died, at the age of 63 years, and Caled was stopped in his bloody career.*

A. D. 634.—By the will of Abubeker, Omar was destined to the succession of caliph; and when he ascended the throne, Abulbeidah took the chief command of the armies, instead of the general Caled, who had formerly superseded him in the direction of the forces which were in Syria. But the intrepidity and skill of Caled ensured him an important trust in the wars of Omar; and, in the reign of this caliph, Persia, Chaldea, Mesopotamia, and Syria, were added to the empire of the Saracens. It was now that Jerusalem fell into the hands of the caliphs; and Omar displayed a laudable moderation at the

* Abulphargii Hist. dynast. p. 110; Annal. Moslem. Abulfedor, edit. Reiskii, 4to, A. D. 1789, vol. i, p. 205, &c.; and Ockley's Hist. of the Saracens, title Abubeker.

siege of that ancient and venerable city. To the patriarch and inhabitants, he granted an honourable capitulation, and respected the christian churches; but upon the place where the temple of Solomon stood, he built a mosque, for the exercise of the Mohammedan religion.^a

Egypt, on account of its importance, was now an object of ambition; and thither Amru Ben^b Alas bent his warlike course. By intrigues, or suspicions at court, he was in danger of being recalled, while he was yet but on his march to Egypt. But he took the fortress of Farma, afterwards Heliopolis, and thence continued his way toward Memphis.

He stopped at a fortress, on the eastern bank of the Nile, at the foot of Mount Meattern, which had been built, and called Babylon, by the Persians; and there the army of Amru met with

^a D'Herbelot, titre Abubeker et Omar.

^b Ben means son, and Ben Alas, the son of Alas.

a bold resistance. This station was defended with more zeal, because on its fate the safety or overthrow of Memphis depended. The preparations were so formidable, that Amru, who had only 4,000 men, waited for a reinforcement, and did not engage till his numbers amounted to 8,000 troops.

Mocawcas, the prefect of Egypt, being an Egyptian, and a Jacobite, hated the Greeks, and the decisions of Chalcedon, or that faith which was afterwards denominated catholic, and threw off entirely his allegiance to the emperor of Constantinople. Fear also operated in producing this change of conduct; for, during the Persian war, while Byzantium was in a state of siege, Mocawcas, taking advantage of the weak and agitated condition of the Roman empire, turned the revenues of Egypt from their proper channel, and applied them to his own particular use. Seeing the danger to which he was exposed from Constantinople, and zealous for the

Monophysite doctrines, he cast himself into the hands of the Arabian general.

To give the Saracens an easy method of success, and yet to prevent an appearance of treachery, Mocawcas prevailed upon the greater number of the Greeks to retire from the threatening danger, and take refuge with him in the isle of Roda. The few Greeks, or friends of Constantinople, who obstinately remained in the fortress, were soon overcome by the army of Amru. Those who escaped fled toward Alexandria, and were joined by their countrymen who had sought for safety in the isle of Roda. Amru pursued the Greeks to Kerama al Shoraik ; and, after several severe encounters, they fled from the Saracens, and took refuge in Alexandria. Amru laid siege to the city, and made a breach in the wall ; but his army were severely galled, and obliged to retreat. Several were taken prisoners, and, among the rest, Amru himself. The dignified air

of this general's conduct, and the lofty tone in which he spoke, had almost betrayed his rank to the governor of Alexandria, when Uerdan, who was a person of inferior note, but faithful and fertile in resource, struck his master on the face, and reproached him as mean and presuming. The deception had its full effect; every suspicion was removed; and the prisoners were permitted to depart, upon an express covenant, that persons of consideration should be sent from the camp of Amru to negotiate terms of peace. When the prisoners returned to the Arabian army, the shouts of joy convinced the Greeks how much they had been deceived. The Saracens, with renewed vigour, assaulted the town of Alexandria; and, A. H. 20, and A. D. 640, the city was surrendered to the Arabian conquerors. On a favourable occasion, when the city was yet in disorder, an attempt was made by the Greeks to recover it; but the attempt was unsuccessful.

Tempted by the richness of Alexandria, and enraged at the conduct of the inhabitants, the soldiers of Arabia panted for plunder; but Amru was averse from this measure; and the caliph himself forbad them to pillage. Luxury had not yet enfeebled the Arabian nerves; the dress of the Saracens was simple, their food plain; and those in authority over them were desirous of preserving their native strength, and the simplicity of their manners. On both sides great numbers had fallen in the contest; and the soldiers of Amru, besides the desire of plunder, were anxious to enter Alexandria, and take vengeance upon the citizens, who, after the capitulation was signed, had favoured a revolt, by which many Arabians were slain.^k The people of Egypt were numbered, and exposed to a tax upon their person and property. Though Mo

^k Eutych. Annal. vol. ii, p. 303, &c.; and Al Makin edit. Lugduni Batavorum, A. D. 1625, p. 24.

cawcas had stipulated for the safety of Memphis, yet it was plundered by the order of the caliph Omar; but many privileges were bestowed upon the Jacobites, who were inimical to the interests of Constantinople. They were a mixed people, consisting of Egyptians, Nubians, and Abyssinians, together with Jews, and perhaps some of Greek and Roman extraction.

Not long previous to this time, the offices of prefect and patriarch, for the purpose of watching and overcoming the Jacobites, were sometimes united in the same person. In this double capacity Cyrus acted in Egypt; and the Jacobites having been stripped of both civil and ecclesiastical power, their patriarch Benjamin was put to flight, and he took refuge among the monks of Upper Egypt. By the interest of Mocawcas, however, the Egyptians were at length put in possession of the revenues of the church; Cyrus the catholic, or Melchite patriarch and prefect, was divested of

his power, and Benjamin, the friend of the Monophysites, was recalled. In those times the followers of Mohammed gave a choice of three things to those with whom they went to war,—to become proselytes; to pay tribute; or to try the issue of battle. The Jacobites had voluntarily submitted to tribute, acknowledged the Mohammedan power, and were protected by the state.^f

The unlettered Arabians could not appreciate the value of the famous library which was collected at Alexandria. John Philoponus, a grammarian and scholar of great note, observed, that Amru did not enter the library in the list of valuable acquirements which he was preparing to send to Omar; and therefore he requested the books to be bestowed upon him. He urged the application, by the strong motive of conferring a favour, not upon him only,

^f Renaudotii Hist. Pat. Alex. edit. Parisiis, A. D. 1713, p. 161, &c.

but upon the friends of learning in general. Willing to indulge the grammarian, for whom he had a high respect, as a man of virtue and reputation, Amru transmitted his request to Omar; but received an answer which blasted the hopes of John, and disappointed the friendship of Amru. In the process of time, the Saracens understood the value of learning, and liberally encouraged it: but, in this early period of the Mohammedan government, no book was of value but the Coran; and the library in question was doomed to destruction. Hordes of barbarous nations have overwhelmed improved countries, and instantly obscured the light of knowledge; but Omar, by ignorance and misguided zeal, endeavoured, by one effort, to pluck the sun from the firmament of science, and to leave the world in mental darkness. The liberal donations of princes and kings, and the valuable labours of wise, and learned men were, by one fatal mandate, degraded from their

station, and employed to warm the bagnios of luxury, and dissolve in pleasure the sons of dissipation.^c

The destruction of the Alexandrian library has been often a subject of lamentation, because it is justly supposed to have contained many books of uncommon value. The elegant historian of *The Decline and Fall of the Roman empire*, in one of those eccentric positions for which he was remarkable, plainly insinuates, that the library was not destroyed; and, if it were consumed, he considers the loss to have been but small. That some writers, as Eutychi-
us, Al Makin, and others, whom he specifies, should not have taken notice of this event, is neither wonderful nor uncommon, though the statement may have been true. Every person who records annals does not specify every particular; and a historian, in different cir-

^c Abulpheraj. Hist. dynast. p. 114.

cumstances, differs from himself in particularising events. Thus Abulpharajius, who is the leading historian with respect to the destruction of the library at Alexandria, makes no mention of this misfortune when writing the Syrian history of the same war. But, in confirmation of what Abulpharajius hath asserted, in his History of the dynasties, the historian Abdolatiph adds his testimony; and a similar support is given, in the manuscripts of Macrisi, which are deposited in the Bodleian library at Oxford.^b

As to the loss which must have been sustained, provided the conflagration did in reality take place, it will be sufficient to observe, that the library of the Serapium was begun to be collected before the age of Augustus, when books of importance were easy to be found. As the beneficence of Cleopatra added 200,000 volumes, which had constituted the library of Pergamus, and were given to her

^b White's edit. of Abdolatiph, 4to, p. 65, and 115.

by her favourite Antony, the collection which was destroyed by Omar must at least have contained valuable monuments of Greek and Roman learning. But if no books of importance were to be found in the Serapium, but such as could easily be procured in other situations, yet, in a library which was so long connected with the most eminent schools of literature and philosophy, there must have been notes, commentaries, and incidental information, which would both have been curious and useful. Therefore, the value of the library is not to be estimated, as Mr. Gibbon asserts, by the mass of controversial divinity, which, in the progress of strife, might there have been deposited. In the civil commotions which happened at Alexandria, the library of the Serapium would doubtless be exposed to occasional injuries.^b But as these were mostly on account of religion, the books of christian controversy would be most

^b Orosius lib. vi, c. 15 ; and Renaudot. Hist. Pat. p. 170.

apt to suffer violence. When, under the direction of Theophilus, the Serapium was destroyed by a ferocious mob, the devastation appears to have been confined to the apartments of idolatry; and no mention is made of an injury being offered, either to the library or palace. But whatever destruction might at different times have been committed, yet the books appear to have been very numerous at the time when Arabian ignorance commanded them to be burned. Unfortunately for Mr. Gibbon, the authorities which he quotes, to prove that the library of the Serapium was spoiled of its books before the invasion of Amru, have all, except Orosius, both in the text and notes, a direct reference to the destruction of the Bruchium, which, we formerly found, was accidentally set on fire, when Julius Cæsar resided at Alexandria.^d

^d Aul. Gell. Noctes Attic. lib. vi, c. 15. edit. A. D. 1666, and A. D. 1706. Ammian. Marcellin. lib. xxii, c. 16, et Oros. lib. vi, c. 5.

While Amru was governor of Egypt, the Saracens, for the first time, had an important command at sea; and they subdued the coast of Africa as far as Tripoli. Amru poured upon Egypt his best favours; regulated its police; improved the general situation of the country; and, upon the place where he encamped in the view of taking Memphis, he built a town in memorial, which he called Al Fostat, or the tent. About this time there was a great scarcity of provisions in Arabia; and, from the plentiful granaries in Egypt, Amru sent, on camels, an incredible supply of corn to the caliph. Omar, seeing the importance of Egypt, as a land of plenty, commanded a navigable communication to be opened between the Nile and the Arabian gulf.

The flight of Mohammed to Medina, is called, in the language of Arabia, the Hegira, and forms an epoch from which the Mohammedans calculate the times and periods of their annals. The flight

of the prophet happened upon the first day of the Arabian month called the former Rabi, corresponding to the 13th of September, A. D. 622. But when Omar fixed the era of the Hegira, he placed the commencement of it, for the sake of expediency, upon the first day of the month Moharan, which was the first of that Arabian year, and coincides with Friday, July 16th, A. D. 622.^d

But Omar, amid all his attentions, virtues, and trials, was put to death by the hand of an assassin. This caliph was successful in war, and not only added provinces, but whole nations, to the empire of Mohammed. He was temperate in his manner of living ; commanded high respect ; and distinguished himself for benevolence, as well as for justice. He was the first caliph who took the title of Emir al Mumenim, the prince or commander of the faithful. To the purity of his general conduct, he

^d D'Herbelot, titre Omar.

added the disinterested and inflexible resolution of refusing to nominate his son to the caliphate. He declared it to be an elective situation ; and committed the choice of the next caliph to fix persons of eminence, who were about the throne.^s

A. D. 643.—Othman was raised to the caliphate, and began his reign by introducing many changes in the appointments of state. Amru was removed from the government of Egypt, and Abdallah Ben Said was invested with that important command. The new governor was a man of honourable rank, and noted among the dexterous horsemen of Arabia, for his skill in riding ; but he was unacceptable to the people of Egypt. Amru, who founded the Saracen government in the kingdom of the Ptolemies, was prudent as well as brave ;

^s Abulfeda, vit. Mahom. c. 22 & 23 ; Abulfed. vol. i, p. 223, &c.; D'Herbelot, titre Omar ; & Ockley's Hist. of the Saracens, title Omar.

and, being much respected in Egypt, the new governor entered that province under a cloud of prejudice and discontentment.

To acquire fame, and extend the empire of the caliphs, Abdallah renewed the conquest of Africa, which Amru had begun. To aid him in this hazardous undertaking, 20,000 well equipped Arabs arrived from Medina. They brought along with them the blessing of the caliph; and, having joined their numbers to the camp of Abdallah, near Memphis, they took the way of the desert, and bent their course toward the Atlantic ocean. This region had hitherto filled the traveller and the warrior with dread; but the Arabs of the desert, accustomed to perils and drought, marched boldly, with their camels, which nature hath formed for scenes like these, and, by successful exertions, arrived at Tripoli.

A. D. 647.—Amru seems rather to have visited than subdued Tripoli, or at

least it was not retained in the possession of the Saracens. It was therefore now to be approached by a regular siege; and Gregory, a Grecian prefect, came to its relief, with a numerous and well appointed body of troops. He was attended by his daughter, a young lady of uncommon valour, as well as remarkable beauty. She was trained, in those rude times, to the art of war, and fought by the side of her father. Pointing to her attracting appearance, heightened by the blush of modesty, and the splendour of her arms, the father promised her in marriage, with the dowry of 100,000 pieces of gold, to the brave warrior who should bring to him the head of Abdallah, the Saracen commander. A prize so engaging and uncommon struck the Saracen army with dismay; for who would not seek a reward so charming, so great, and so honourable. To avoid a disaster which might be fatal to the Arabian fame and interest, Abdallah was pre-

vailed upon, by the entreaties of the army, to abide in his tent. At this critical juncture, the famous Zobeir, the friend and fellow-soldier of Amru, arrived at the camp with a few attendants; and where, said he, is the general of the Moslem army? The conscious eye of the surrounding soldiers directed him to the tent of Abdallah. The whole army felt the degradation, and the general himself was covered with shame. Let the power of Gregory's prize, said Zobeir, be hurled back upon himself; and whosoever shall bring his head to the Mohammedan camp, shall have the proffered damsel of Greece, and as ample a sum of gold as Gregory has promised. Though the siege was already abandoned in dismay, and the armies, amid desultory conflicts, had retired into the interior of the country, yet the proposal was approved; and Zobeir, being invested with proper powers, directed the enterprise. The Grecian army offered defiance; but Zobeir, with a part of his

troops, met the enemy ; and when, by dexterous movements, he had spent the day without a decisive blow, the Greeks put off their armour, and retired to their tents. But Zobeir drew out the forces which he held in reserve ; and, darting upon the troops of Constantinople, when they were unprepared, threw them into disorder, and subdued them. With his own hand Zobeir slew the prefect ; but he neither demanded nor received his captive daughter. This advantage was obtained near Spaitla, which was the ancient Sufetula, a town about 150 miles to the south of Carthage. It was built upon a fertile spot of land, well watered by springs, and shaded by luxuriant groves. Still the place exhibits many monuments of Roman genius, and Roman greatness ; but disease, and various wants, forcing the Saracens to quit that sweet abode, they returned, loaded with spoils ; and, after an absence of fifteen months, arrived with triumph in Egypt. Zobeir carried the tidings

of their success to Medina, but concealed the fame of his own deeds ; and the glory of the conquest was for a time ascribed to Abdallah.

Though Othman's reign was prosperous, still he was unpopular in Egypt ; and the emperor of Constantinople attempted to recover that country, in order that he might command the ample supply of provisions which had formerly been derived from the rich soil of the Delta. During the minority of Constantine, the grandson of the emperor Heraclius, a fleet of ships and transports were conducted to the shores of Egypt. Manuel, a Roman general of valour and experience, landed with a considerable body of troops ; and, in the discontented and unprepared state of the country, he easily got possession of Alexandria. Roused by this misfortune, the caliph saw the error which he had committed in appointing Abdallah to the important government of Egypt ; and he attempted to retrieve the shattered affairs of

that country, by placing Amru in his former station. When this respectable and much beloved governor appeared in Egypt, confidence took place of despair: the natives hailed his arrival; the Arabs flocked to his standard; and his army was instantly in formidable array.

The Greeks defended themselves with obstinate valour; but former success gave Amru courage; and he vowed, if Heaven would once more grant him a triumph over Alexandria, that he would raze its walls, and sweep away its means of defence. He was again victorious, and his threat was fulfilled; but, not delighting in blood, when he found his soldiers butchering the enemy with the madness of revenge, he stayed their unrelenting fury; and, having built a mosque, where he stopt the destroying sword, he called it the mosque of mercy. Manuel returned, with difficulty and disgrace, to Constantinople; and Egypt, under the the pressure of the Saracens,

continued to sink in the scale of nations. A. D. 651.—Yesdejerd, the last prince of the ancient line of Persian kings, died; and the nation was completely incorporated with the Mohammedan empire. In the same year, the Arabs entered the kingdom of Nubia, with terror and destruction. The christian faith had formerly penetrated into that country; but the nation then submitted to the Saracens; and we are from that time to date the influence of the Mahommedan religion in the kingdom of Nubia.ⁱ

By selfish, partial, and imprudent, conduct, Othman exposed himself to the disapprobation of his subjects; and his glory in war did not obliterate his private indiscretions. Though he might have been more cautious, yet the errors of his reign were not sufficient to have excited such violent discontentment among the people. The principal source of those disquietudes must be sought for

ⁱ Al Makin, p. 32; and Abulferajius, p. 116.

n the family of Mohammed. Ayesha, the widow of the prophet, was dissatisfied with the appointment of Othman to the caliphate; and she never ceased to excite murmurs and strife. The whispers of discontentment, which ascended from the various provinces of the empire, waxed louder, and became more concentrated, till the cry of vengeance was strong. The caliph trembled on his throne; and promises were made of redress. Amru appears to have been again removed from the government of Egypt, and one of unpopular manners appointed in his stead. Among other accommodations proposed by the caliph, Mohammed, the son of Abubeker, was to be constituted lieutenant of Egypt; but the dark counsels of iniquity were hatching a plot which soon burst upon the devoted head of Othman.

Among the Arabs of those times, letters of state, instead of being certified by a written signature, were sealed by

the king's seal. Merwan took advantage of his situation of secretary in the caliph's household, and wrote a letter, in Othman's name, addressed to the governor of Egypt, who was then to be superseded in his appointment by Mohammed Ben Abubeker. In this letter it was ordered, that, upon the arrival of Mohammed and his suit, they should be seized, and instantly impaled. It is to be presumed that the son of Abubeker was apprised of this fraud : but whatever might have been the case, he and his attendants seized the bearer of the letter, and the contents, when made known, excited general indignation. Multitudes flocked to Medina ; and the caliph was held in utter detestation. In vain were his protestations of innocence : the enraged, but deluded, mob, assailed him with violence ; and he died of his wounds.^h

^h D'Herbelot, titre Othman.

A. D. 655.—Ali, being a cousin of the prophet, and married to his daughter Fatima, was chosen caliph without opposition, but not without murmurs. Ayesha was still dissatisfied; and she, in connection with Merwan, Moawiah, and other confederates, refused to swear allegiance to the caliph. This they declined under pretence of waiting till they avenged Othman's death; but they knew that Ali was innocent of that deed, and were conscious that they themselves had planned and promoted the infamous murder. Their whole views were aggrandisement; and disappointed ambition guided their conduct.

Every disguise was at length taken off, and both Ayesha and Moawiah went to war against Ali. Ayesha was completely subdued; and Moawiah acquired so much strength, that the matter at issue between him and the caliph, was submitted to arbitration. By intrigues Ali was deposed from the imperial sta-

tion ; but he never surrendered his pretensions ; and Moawiah did not obtain the caliphate till the death of Ali. Upon ascending the throne Ali appointed Cais Ben Said, or, as others express it, Said Ben Cais, to the government of Egypt ; and his choice was justified by the prudence of the governor. He found disaffected persons, and the friends of Moawiah, numerous in Egypt ; and he deemed it expedient rather to gain their affections, than to keep them in awe. Moawiah, endeavouring to turn this pacific conduct to his own advantage and aggrandisement, produced a letter, as if written by Cais, in which there were the highest pretensions of friendship toward Moawiah. Cais was immediately suspected by Ali ; and Mahommed, the son of Abubeker, was sent to supersede him. The new governor was unpopular when he was formerly in Egypt, and his conduct now rendered him odious. He treated with rigour all

those whom he suspected to be of Moawiah's party, and drove them to despair.

The government of Egypt was not in so settled a condition as quietly to admit of such proceedings ; and the flame of civil war immediately appeared. To re-establish his authority in Egypt, Ali invested Maleh Shuter with full powers to correct every abuse ; but the watchful eye of Moawiah marked this appointment, which was dangerous to his interest, and resolved to defeat the important measure. On his way to Egypt, Shuter was perfidiously entertained, and cut off by poison. In the meantime the hand of authority was severe in Egypt, and many enemies of Ali fled to Damascus. By these Moawiah was informed, that Egypt, in its weak and distracted situation, might easily be subdued. The discernment of Moawiah was conspicuous in the conduct which he now pursued. Amru Ben Alas, the

old and tried friend of Egypt, was, in the name, and by the authority, of Moawiah invested again with the supreme command of that government. His access into Egypt was easy; and scarcely had he approached within sight of Alexandria, when the shouts of the people proclaimed their joy. He was joined by Ben Sarig, who led the discontented party; and Mohammed, the governor, in the interest of Ali, was taken, and put to death. Thus Amru again cherished Egypt, and there he established the power of Moawiah.

The profound respect which was entertained for the Coran, induced some of the more zealous Mahommedans to consider it, and the traditions of their religion, as sufficient to solve every difficulty, and decide every cause. When, therefore, Ali submitted to the arbitration of men, in the course of those commotions which subsisted between him and Moawiah, some inhabitants of Irac

reprobated his conduct as heretical ; and, having separated themselves from the communion of Ali's party, they were therefore denominated Carejites. That sect became numerous, and appeared in hostile array, but were overcome and dispersed. Smarting under the losses which they had sustained, and stimulated by revenge, they attempted to acquire an ascendancy in the empire, by assassinating Amru, Moawiah, and Ali, who appeared to have the chief influence and direction in the state. Three men, abandoned in principles, and of desperate fortunes, agreed among themselves to perpetrate the deed ; and the day which they fixed for accomplishing their purpose, was Friday, the 17th of the Mohammedan month Ramadan, which was a day of solemn assembly. Barak Eben Abdalla, who was one of the conspirators, aimed a blow at Moawiah, and struck him in the reins ; but the wound was not mortal. Amru Ben

Beker intended to kill Amru Ben Alas, while performing his devotions, in a mosque of Egypt; but not knowing personally the object of his revenge, he killed Carijah, the captain of the guard, who, in the absence of Alas, was leading the public devotion; but Abdalrahman smote Ali so severely, that he was covered with blood, and, in a few hours, died of his wounds. By his friends, Ali was honoured with many titles of respect and veneration; but, during the course of their violence and warfare, he and Moawiah forgot the benevolence which ought to entwine itself with our prayers, and cursed each other in their respective mosques. Moreover, the house of Ommiah long continued to curse Ali in their prayers, after the fortunes of his family were humbled in the dust.^b

^b Annal. Abulf. vol. i, p. 279, &c.; and D'Herb. titre Ali.

A. H. 41, & A. D. 661.—When Ali was murdered, his elder son, Hassan, appeared as heir to his father; but, being of a timid and pacific temper, he withdrew from the scenes of civil commotion; and, resigning his pretensions to the government, Moawiah was declared to be caliph. Ommiah, from whom this prince descended, was nephew of Hashem, who was a person of distinction among the Coreish, and great-grandfather of Mohammed. This race of caliphs was called the Ommiades. Not long after Moawiah was raised to the summit of his ambition, the famous Amru died. This man possessed a character which was eminent for courage and prudence; and, having early attached himself to the interests of Moawiah, he bore a considerable part in his triumphs and final success. In return for his fidelity and prudent exertions, he enjoyed from the caliph a kind of independent station in the government of Egypt, and was allowed to dispose of its revenues as his

own wisdom and foresight should direct.

While the successors of Mohammed were quarreling among themselves, their conquests in Africa were neglected; and the emperor of Constantinople repeatedly attempted to recover what he had lost on the southern shores of the Mediterranean. The heavy tribute which had been paid to the Mohammedan conquerors, taught the Grecians what to demand; but they exceeded the example which they pretended to follow; and their exactions were very grievous. In this season of calamity, the people invited Moawiah to bring them relief; and he compelled the Greeks to depart from Africa. But of all the generals who entered that region, it was Acba Ben Amer who made the nations tremble by the thunder of his power. In the ardour of conquest, and the pursuit of glory, he darted into the unexplored regions of the peninsula, and carried his arms to the Western ocean. When he was op-

posed by a boundless expanse of sea, he felt the throes of disappointment; and, in a rage of ardour, he rode into the sea, as if he held its waves in defiance.

The natives of Africa had been accustomed to yield a ready submission to every army of invaders; but they as eagerly seized an opportunity of resuming their power, and regaining their independence. To hold them in controul, general Acba, A. D. 675, founded the city Cairwan, and reared it under pretence of making it a station for caravans. But he artfully built a citadel, made it a place of great strength; and it became afterwards the residence of those who governed the west of Africa. Cairwan was situated on a barren plain, about twenty-four miles to the westward of Susa, and perhaps was the Vico Augusti of the ancient geography. It exhibits some superb ruins, and monuments of ancient greatness. But so precarious are human acquisitions, and so difficult is it to preserve possessions dis-

tant and extensive, that while Acba was endeavouring to secure the remote regions of his conquest, he found it necessary to return, in order to suppress a rebellion which had sprung up in a less distant part of the country. But after Acba had travelled so far, and escaped so many dangers, he was cut off on his way home, when engaged in single combat with a rival chief. The commotions, which continued in Arabia, and the adjoining countries, engaged so much the attention of the caliphs, that it was not till a future period that the Saracen power was completely prevalent in Africa. About this time, A. D. 679, Moawiah died, after he had reigned, in the full possession of the caliphate, for about the space of eighteen years.^b

A. D. 683.—From the death of Moawiah, till the time at which we have now arrived, the caliphate was held, in a

^b D'Herbelot, titre Moaviah, Leo African. Lug. Batav. A. D. 1632, p. 575, &c.; and Shaw's Travels, Oxford edit. fol. p. 200 & 201.

succession of two short reigns, by Yezid, or Jezid, the son, and Moawiah the grandson, of Moawiah, the first caliph of the Ommiades. When Jezid succeeded to his father, Hossein, the remaining son of Ali laid claim to the caliphate; but Syria, Persia, and Egypt, supported the interests of Yezid; and while Hossein only received succours from Mecca and Medina, he was overpowered in battle, and slain. The Persians, who were followers of Ali, annually commemorate his death with much solemnity and pomp. Moawiah, the son of Jezid, retained the supreme government but a little more than six weeks; and then, having abdicated the authority, the empire remained without a head, and in awful suspense, for the space of two months.

Merwan, the son of Hakem, was elected caliph, and placed on the throne of Syria, in the city of Damascus, which became the seat of government, in the family of the Ommiades;

whereas Ali had removed his royal seat from Medina to Cufa. During these changes and convulsions, Egypt appears to have thrown off the Saracen yoke; but it was again reduced, and added to the provinces of Merwan. The enjoyment of his success, however, endured but a few months; and his son Abdalmelek was appointed in his stead. In the meantime Abdallah, the son of Zobier, reigned at Mecca, and was the enemy of Abdalmelek, as well as of the whole race of Ommiah.

As a rival prince had the command of Mecca, Abdalmelek, the caliph of Damascus, found it imprudent to permit the subjects of his empire to go in pilgrimage to that city, and therefore he took the politic precaution of removing the pulpit in which Omar prayed at Jerusalem, and of placing it in the mosque of that venerable city, which he commanded to be thenceforward considered as sacred by the subjects of his government. Abdalmelek having far extended his conquests, surrounded Abdallah

in the city of Mecca, took the temple, and destroyed the rival caliph.

In the full current of success, the troops of Abdalmelek entered Africa; and Carthage, which had hitherto been unshaken by the Saracens, fell by the power of Abdalmelek. The noise of this disaster threw Constantinople into confusion; and John, the patriarch, being anxious for the christians of Africa, was armed also with prefectorial powers, and sailed for the port of Carthage. His fleet suffered considerably in the voyage; but, upon his approach to the city, the Saracens fled; and the inhabitants of Carthage received him with triumph. But, in the ensuing spring, the recruited Saracens having returned to Carthage, took the town, and obliged the patriarch, with his shattered forces, to sail for Constantinople.^a

This celebrated city was founded by Queen Dido, about a century before the

^a Abulpharjius, p. 127 & 128.

building of Rome ; and, in its greatest prosperity, appears to have contained 700,000 inhabitants. Its circumference has been calculated at twenty-three miles, while others have confined its dimensions to fifteen. But, when it was burned by the Romans, B. C. 147, the conflagration lasted seven days. Julius Cæsar, and some of his successors, planted colonies at Carthage ; and the emperor Adrian, having built some of its ruined walls, gave it the name of Adrianople. A. D. 439, Genseric wrested it from the Romans, and it continued to be the African capital of the Vandals for more than a hundred years. A. D. 688, it fell into the hands of the Saracens, and, after various changes, which were always unfavourable to its prosperity, it was finally left in ruins.

Carthage appears to have been chiefly built upon three hills, inferior in note, as well as in number, to those of Rome. The old and famous port, to the northward of the city, has now become a

morass, by the sand which the sea and the river Mejerda^b have long been depositing. The city having been built on a parched soil, and situated in a dry climate, was so contrived as to catch the rain water in cisterns which were formed under the houses; and water was brought from springs at the distance of more than fifty miles. Philosophy had not then opened to the world the knowledge of hydraulics; therefore, instead of being able to bring water by pipes, through any inequalities of ground, provided the source be higher than the receiving cistern, there was then a necessity of conducting it over hollows and valleys by aqueducts of expensive workmanship. Some of the arches which were constructed for these valuable purposes near Carthage, were more than seventy feet high, and supported by columns of great strength.^c

^b The ancient Bagrada.

^c Leo African. p. 554; and Shaw's Travels, p. 150, &c.

Abdalaziz, one of Merwan's sons, was appointed governor of Egypt ; and he continued in that important situation, not only till the death of his father, but also till he himself paid the debt of nature, which was toward the latter end of his brother Abdalmelek's reign. During the commotions which subsisted between his father's family and Abdallah, the son of Zobeir, he was firm to the interests of his friends, and dignified in his conduct. His residence was at Al Fostat ; but, on account of his health, he was at length directed by his physicians to retire to Holwan. While he resided in this situation, he regularly, upon the Fridays, performed his devotions at Al Fostat, and was exemplary in virtuous conduct.

He shaded Holwan with date trees, built a Mikkeas, for measuring the increase of the Nile ; and, being partial to the place of his retreat, he once intended to have removed the trade and commerce of Al Fostat to Holwan, the

favourite place of his abode. The christians, who often felt the weight of the Saracen bigotry and power, were protected by Abdalaziz; and both those of the Melchite and Monophysite persuasion were received into the confidence of the governor. He was a man of genuine moderation; and permitted them to build churches instead of those which violence had demolished. While Abdalaziz was in the government of Egypt, ambassadors arrived from India to solicit a bishop, who might instruct them in the christian religion.

Ethiopia, and the parts of Africa to the south of Egypt, were, by the ancient geographers, incorrectly denominated India; but the ambassadors whom we have mentioned, must have arrived from India, properly so called, because we find them, on their way home, passing with their christian teacher through Mesopotamia. A. D. 705, Abdalaziz, governor of Egypt, died, and Abdallah, the son of the caliph, was appointed to

succeed him. It was difficult to follow the steps of so valuable a man as Abdalaziz; and we find that his successor was not in favour with the Egyptians.^d

A. D. 705.—Abdalmelek did not long survive his brother Abdalaziz; and now we find Walid, the son of the late caliph, invested with the supreme power. Since the death of Abdallah, the son of Zobeir, there was no rival for the caliphate; and Walid was in full possession of the Mohammedan throne. In the former reign, the Greeks, we found, were expelled from Africa; but the Arabs were not fully masters of the country. An African queen, whose name was Cahina, raised the standard of resistance, and drove the Saracens into Egypt. To prevent their return into Africa, she is represented as having destroyed the cities and the vineyards, together with all the fruits of industry

^d Al Makin, p. 68; et Renaudot. Hist. Patr. p. 184 & 189.

and population. So far extended was her destroying hand, that the whole country is described as a scene of desolation. But the more probable statement of those proceedings appears to be thus conceived: that Cahina, to prevent the Saracens from returning into her country, laid waste the eastern border, that they might neither be invited by comforts, nor provided with the necessities of life.

Corrah Ben Sharik, in his management of Egypt, appears not only to have been destitute of prudence, but openly profane. Delicacy is the duty and interest of every man; but this ornament of life, which is graceful in a private station, becomes a national duty in men of public appointments. Yet Corrah, in the capacity of an Egyptian governor, defied every appearance of decency; and, in contempt of the christian worship, went into the churches, and placed beside him, in those sacred abodes, his partners of impurity and guilt. But,

while he was debasing himself by iniquity, and injuring the cause of the Saracens in Egypt, Musa, the lieutenant of the caliph's forces, was traversing Africa in triumph, and had regained the countries which the Mohammedans had lost.

So far had Musa advanced in conquering the country, that there was only one strong hold which defied his exertions. This desirable post was the fortress of Ceuta, which was the ancient Abila, or pillar of Hercules, on the African side of the straits. It was bravely defended by Count Julian, who was a chief of the Gothic tribes; and the prospect of seizing it appeared to be distant and dangerous. But, in this situation of anxiety and doubt, Musa was gratified and astonished, by an offer from Julian himself, not only to put the strong hold into his possession, but to conduct the Mohammedan troops into the bosom of Spain. A change so sudden, and an of-

fer so unnatural, immediately rouses the mind to speculation and inquiry.

The cause of so uncommon a conduct must have been deep in ambition or revenge ; and the reason of this national parricide must be sought among the commotions and wrongs of an unsettled government. When Witiza was removed from the throne of Spain, Roderick, the representative of a noble house, rose in strength to redress the wrongs which he and others had suffered ; but he blended ambition with the desire of justice, and, in the fulness of power, seized the reins of government. The sons of Witiza, galled by disappointment, could not brook a private life ; and the ill-judged severities of Roderick multiplied and combined his foes. Cava, the daughter of Julian, was the professed object of Roderick's affection ; but he violated her honour, and the injured father became his foe. Influenced by hope, as well as stimulated by revenge, he abandoned the cause of his

country, and led the Arabian conquerors into the heart of Spain.

A. D. 710.—Musa was agitated between fear and ambition. He hesitated to encounter the far-famed Goths within the bounds of their own dominions; and yet he thirsted for enterprise, and panted for glory. In this situation of anxiety, Tarik, one of his confidential generals, was sent thither upon a trial expedition; and, with five hundred warriors, landed on the Spanish shore. His uncommon success, with this small handful, and the inviting prospects of plunder and power emboldened the hopes of Musa; and a formidable armament was prepared for Spain.

A. D. 711.—The troops of Musa sailed from Ceuta, and landed safely at the ancient Calpe, or pillar of Hercules, on the Spanish shore. Gibel Al Tarik, or the mountain of Tarik, proclaims the name of the general who led the expedition; and the name of Gibraltar, thence derived, is a lasting memorial of

the strong position which the Saracens took on the north of the straits. The temporary lines which were then drawn may be considered as the faint beginning of those impregnable works which are the pride of Britain, and the humiliating defiance of France and Spain.^c

Spain had been considerably alarmed by the arrival and success of Tarik ; and the increased appearance of hostile intentions roused the country to action. The whole energies of the Gothic monarchy were put in motion ; and the soldiers flocked from every quarter to join the standard of Roderick their king.

The armies of both sides were numerous ; and, for three successive days, the out-posts tried their strength ; but, upon the fourth, the armies joined in close battle, and the Saracens prevailed. The Goths were no more the powerful people who took Rome, and travelled in triumph

^c M. Deguignes, edit. a Paris, A. D. 1756, vol. i, part ii, line 6.

from the Danube to the Atlantic ocean. Ease and security had unnerved their strength ; their walls and fortifications were crumbling into ruins ; and the young men of the nation were not punctually trained to arms. Thus the spirit of the Goths was broken ; and Tarik marched, with uninterrupted success, from the rock of Gibraltar to the bay of Biscay. But Tarik had been too prosperous to escape envy : Musa heard of his success with jealousy ; and entered Spain to degrade him.

The Goths saw their error when it was too late, and felt indignant that their necks had tamely bowed to the yoke. The cities and places of strength which surrendered to Tarik, grasped the spear in the last pangs of expiring strength ; and, when Musa entered the country, he met with more resistance than was to have been expected. His steps, however, were victorious ; and, near Toledo, he was met by Tarik. After the eastern manner, the general pro-

strated himself to the ground ; but Musa acted with reserve ; and at last Tarik was cast into prison.

A. D. 712.—While Musa was embracing in idea vast projects of aggrandisement ; while he was resolving to subdue Italy, Gaul, and Germany ; while he was proposing to seize Constantinople, and add the whole of these conquests to the empire of the Mohammedans, the friends of Tarik had found access to the caliph ; and, the injuries which he suffered having been explained, Musa was recalled to answer for his conduct. He was disgraced for what he had done ; and the only favour which he could obtain, was leave to retire to Mecca ; and there he soon died under the pressure of age and sorrow.^f

A. D. 714.—The Saracens had now the chief management in Spain ; but still they were ardent in the pursuit of power. From the northern shore of the Medi-

^f Deguignes, tom. i, par. i, liv. 6.

terranean, to the banks of the Loir, they ran a victorious course ; but were stopped in their progress by the troops and valour of Charles Martel. He vanquished them in a decisive battle near the city Poitieris ; and, having chased them across the Pyrenees, confined them to Spain. During this century, Constantinople was repeatedly assailed by the Saracens ; and the granaries of Egypt supplied the besiegers with provision : but still the empire of the Romans, though falling, resisted the Arabian power.

The monastic institutions of the christian religion, which were founded in opposition to the most obvious dictates of nature, were never worthy of approbation ; but at length they became so corrupt, that they merited the scoff of unbelievers ; and, to the real christians, they were objects of just regret. In those dark ages, which we are now traversing, the monks were great in power, and turbulent in their conduct. Al-

though those of Egypt were separated from the rest of the orders, both by situation and sentiments; though they lived in cells of the desert, and were tolerated, rather than encouraged, by the Mohammedans, yet they felt an interest different from that of the state, and appear to have roused the jealousy of government. We find them now wearing badges of distinction, which were inscribed with the name of the monastery to which they belonged. These public marks of severity may be viewed as evidences of the increasing vigour of the Saracen government; but we may also believe, that the restless conduct of the monks assisted to whet, against themselves, the keen edge of Mohammedan persecution.

The worship of idols was now prevalent in the European churches; and, among many instances which might be produced, that similar, though restrained, sentiments prevailed in Egypt, we may mention the head of S^t. Mark,

which was kept and shewn as a valuable relict. To such symptoms of idol worship, in Egypt, may be ascribed some of those persecutions which the christians of that country about this time endured. The Jacobites, who were formerly more protected than the Melchites, being now more powerful, were consequently more suspected. If the depressed Melchites, who excited less jealousy, were not under the protection of Mohammedan favour, they were less persecuted than the Monophysite party; but, upon the whole, the Jacobite sentiments continued to prevail among the christians in Egypt.^g

^g Renaudot. Hist. Pat. Alex. p. 197, &c.; et Eutych. Annal. Pat. Alex. vol. ii, p. 384, &c.

CHAP. II.

The Abbassides. . . . The Ommiades driven from Arabia and Egypt. . . . They settle in Spain. . . . Bagdad built. . . . Al Rashid. . . . The Aglabites. . . . The Tholonides. . . The Turks usurp much power at Bagdad.

A. D. 749. A. H. 132. **D**URING the reign of several caliphs, the affairs of Egypt were scarcely in view; and the first things which attract our notice, are the overthrow of the Ommiades, and the establishment of a new dynasty on the throne of Damascus. The family of Ommiah, by power and good fortune, were raised to the caliphate; but, by the more immediate connections of the prophet of Mecca, they were uniformly held as usurpers. The descendants of the caliph Ali had been crushed, and were still unable to assert their right; but the Abbassides laid claim to the

caliphate ; and their claim was successful.

Merwan, of the house of Ommiah, was raised to the Mohammedan throne ; but his authority was opposed by the Abbassides, and, after various engagements of an unsuccessful nature, his power was overthrown in a decisive battle. He fled from beyond the Euphrates, passed his own capital, Damascus, without producing a look of pity, or a word of compassion, and, arriving in Egypt, was put to death at Memphis. The victorious house of Abbas spread destruction among the Ommiades ; and from the exterminating stroke of their enemies, none of that royal house escaped, but Abulmudhaffer Abdalrahman. This young prince passed into Spain ; and, A. D. 756, established the Ommiades on the throne of Cordova.^d

The Abbassides were so called from

^d Al Makin, p. 94, &c. ; et Eutych. p. 395 ; Abulpharaj. p. 139 ; et Roderic. Toletan, p. 17.

their progenitor Abbas, who was the uncle of the prophet Mohammed. The first of this family who sat upon the Moslem throne, was Abulabbas, surnamed Saffah. In his reign, the office of vizer, or prime minister, appears to have been first established; and Abu-moslem was placed in that honourable station.^a To this able general and powerful chief, the Abbassides were principally indebted for their elevation to the throne; but, falling under suspicions, and, perhaps, secretly aspiring to the caliphate, he was put to death in the following reign.

Abujafar Al Mansur was the second caliph of the Abbassides, and he came to the throne in troublesome times. Syria was still favourable to the interests of the Ommiades: Cufa and the Chaldean Irac were attached to the house of Ali; and therefore Al Mansur resolved

^a D'Herbelot, titre Vazer, ou Vizir.

to found a new capital, and seat of government. The situation which he pitched upon was on the western bank of the Tigris; and the new city was called Bagdad. A more splendid city was afterwards built on the other side of the river; and the one which was first formed lost its importance, and became a suburb to the other. Here, with a few exceptions, the Abbassides kept their court; but, in the revolutions of empires, Bagdad repeatedly changed masters.

The unsettled affairs of the east so completely engaged the caliphs of Bagdad, that two reigns expired without a single ray of importance falling upon Egypt. But Haron, or Aaron al Rashid, succeeded to the caliphate, A. D. 786; and in his reign the affairs of Egypt rose again into view. Al Rashid was a bold and illustrious conqueror. In the wars of his father Mahadi, he spread terror throughout the empire of Constantinople; and the fear of his name made

the empress Irene quake. When Nicephorus ascended the throne of Constantinople, he proudly demanded from the caliph of Bagdad the possessions and honours which had been lately wrested from his predecessors ; for he knew not the terror nor the undaunted courage of Al Rashid ; but his armies approached Constantinople, and the city shook for fear.

The far-famed caliph was admitted to the friendship of Charlemagne ; and his splendid deeds have constituted him the hero of the Arabian tales.

From a warrior and statesman so great, we might have expected conduct the most noble ; but success is in danger of perverting the most exalted mind. From the high elevation of his power and fame, Al Rashid looked with disdain upon the turbulent movements of Egypt. We have seen, that it was a rich and important province ; but, at so great a distance from Bagdad, the caliph derided its power, and despised its opu-

lence. The office of governor became vacant ; and, in derision, as well as contempt, he appointed to that eminent situation Hozaib, who was a man of Ethiopia, and without knowledge or political experience. Al Rashid, however, as his name imports, was in general conspicuous for justice, and consequently must have possessed many other graces and ornaments of character. Every part of his extensive empire was subject to the eye of his inspection ; and, during the three-and-twenty years of his reign, he made frequent excursions through the various districts and divisions of his government.^e

A. D. 800, A. H. 184.—Notwithstanding the activity and power of Al Rashid, disorders prevailed in his dominions, and especially in the more remote parts of the empire. To regulate his possessions in Africa, which extended west-

^e Al Makin, p. 102 ; Abulpharaj. p. 338, 339 ; Eutych. Annal. vol. ii, p. 396, &c. ; and D'Herbelot, titre Haroun.

ward from Egypt, having the Mediterranean sea on the north, he invested Ibrahim, the son of Aglab, with complete powers of governor and lieutenant. During the late distractions which prevailed in the Mohammedan empire, the governors of Africa had almost acquired independent power; and Ibrahim, discovering how much was at his command, rejected entirely the controuling authority of Bagdad. Thus he established the dynasty of the Aglabites, and fixed the seat of government at Cairwan.^h

A. D. 813.—Al Mamun became emperor of Bagdad; and, while he was upon that throne, the Ommiades of Spain attempted to become again masters of Egypt. They landed an army on the Egyptian shores; and a discontented faction opened for their reception the gates of Alexandria. The conflict was severe for the mastery; but the Andalusian Arabs were, for a time, successful. To

^h Deguignes, tom i, part 2, livre 6.

stem the torrent of rebellion, and repel the Ommiades, the caliph of Bagdad granted Abdallah, or Obeidallah Ben Taher, a commission, which comprehended special powers for reducing Egypt to obedience, and restoring the country to order. But so deep rooted was the rebellion, and so violent the proceedings, that the torrent of abuse could not be stopped till the caliph of Bagdad appeared in person. The rebellion seems chiefly to have been cherished by the descendants of the Greeks who remained in Egypt after the Saracen conquest ; but the vigorous hand of power brought them into subjection, and Egypt again acknowledged the authority of Bagdad.^f

A. D. 823.—The Andalusians were compelled to retire from Egypt ; but they passed into Crete, and possessed it for a hundred and twenty-eight years. Soon

^f Renaudot. Hist. Pat. Alex. p. 251, &c. and 268 ; and Eutych. Annal. Pat. p. 428, &c.

after this, the Aglabites became masters of Sicily; and at length Mohammed, one of their princes, was proclaimed king of the island. A. D. 846, the Aglabites, in the spirit of conquest, entered the Tyber, and advanced to Rome. They felt no reverence for the ancient glory of that renowned city; and they were not overawed by the dignity of its ancient rank. The temples of heroes, and the tombs of saints, were equally exposed to the violence and depredation of the conquering soldiers. When the people were just bending to receive the yoke, Pope Leo IV. rose in the majesty of native greatness, and, by undaunted measures, saved his country from Mohammedan bondage.ⁱ

Scarcely had these events taken place, and the Aglabites returned to their proper station, when the Greeks of Constantinople sailed for Egypt, with a fleet

ⁱ Deguignes Hist. des Huns, tom i, p. 363, 364; et Baroni Annal. A. D. 847.

of 300 ships. They landed at Damietta, and, as it was not prepared for defence, they took it with ease; and, having indulged themselves with plunder, they carried into captivity 600 Mohammedan women. Proceeding to Memphis, they set fire to the city; and returning to Damietta, made its walls the most impregnable of any in Egypt.¹

A. D. 868. A. H. 254.—Egypt being thus in danger from the power of Constantinople, Motas Billah, caliph of Bagdad, sent a new governor to retrieve the affairs of that country. The person who was chosen for this difficult station was Ahmed Ben Tholon, a Turkish general. From the colder and more active regions of the world, there is a tendency to migrate, and procure settlements in more temperate and pleasant climates.

Hence, in the extensive regions of Tartary, there were several descriptions of

¹ Abulpharaj. p. 170, and Abulf. vol. ii, p. 107, &c.

people who were poured out in warlike multitudes, and who over-ran the greater part of the east.

The Scythians, on the western boundary, were pushed forward by the Huns or Tartars : these were urged onward by the Moguls ; and the Mandshurs pressed hard upon the rear of the whole. The Turks, who were a tribe of the Huns, descended from the mountains of Altai, and settled, for a while, on the banks of the rivers Amu and Sirr. The former of these was the Oxus of the Romans, and the Gihon of the eastern nations ; the latter was called Jaxartes, and now sometimes known by the name of Sihon.

In the warlike incursions of the Arabians, many Turkish prisoners were brought to Bagdad ; and, during the commotions of the Mohammedan states, they were placed as guards about the person of the caliph. As the Turkish bands rose to power at the court of Bagdad, their countrymen flocked to the banks of the Tigris ; and, as we advance

in the steps of this history, we shall see their progress and growing strength. Tholon was a Turkish slave belonging to the caliph Al Mamun, and his son Ahmed, by great and striking qualities, rose in confidence among the Turks at Bagdad. The caliph of the Moham-medans became entirely subject to the direction of those foreign troops ; and, by their influence, Ahmed was raised to the government of Egypt.

His appointment was to supersede another governor, who was either not able, or not willing, to regulate Egypt. That governor's name, too, was also Ahmed ; and, having the command of the tribute, he refused to surrender his station ; and the new viceroy found it difficult to force him into compliance. When the new governor, however, had established himself in power, he aspired to a higher station than that of dependent authority. So weak had the Abbassidian caliphs of Bagdad become, among the encroachments of the

Turkish guards, who might now be called their masters, that the whole empire was paralyzed and exposed to invasion. Invited by this state of public affairs, Ahmed, the emir or prince of Egypt, rushed into Syria; reduced Damascus; seized upon Antioch; and pursued a victorious course to the eastern bank of the Euphrates, A. D. 884.

But Cumarawiah, the son and successor of Ahmed, engaged the forces of Mohammed, the caliph of Bagdad; and, from the scene of action, near Damascus, fled toward Egypt. But his flight being unknown to the army, they fought as if he had been present to encourage them; and the fortune of the day having changed, his firm, though undirected, troops, came off victorious. Having recovered from this temporary panic, he fought afterwards with more courage, and penetrating as far into the east, he returned, in possession of an empire which extended from the streams of the Euphrates to the confines of Nubia. This Egyp-

tian emir gave his daughter in marriage to Motadhed, the caliph of Bagdad ; but the peace which thence ensued was of short duration ; for Cumarawiah was soon assassinated ; and a train of misfortunes followed.

A. D. 896.—Jeish, the son of Cumarawiah, succeeded his father in the government of Egypt ; but scarcely had he reigned nine months when he was murdered by the soldiers. His brother Aaron, in the tenth year of his age, was appointed to the government of Egypt ; but, as the court of Bagdad still smarted by the violence which they suffered when Egypt was torn from the empire, they had never ceased to lay schemes for repairing the injury. The youth of Aaron presented an opportunity of accomplishing what was so much desired.

This prince, in whom ambition had scarcely been engendered, was easily persuaded to resign his independence, and reign in Egypt by a delegated authority.

It is probable, that this prince, having repented of the concession into which he had been betrayed, was induced to adopt bold measures for recovering the power which he had lost ; as we soon find Egypt filled with tumults, and desolated by war. Aaron was assassinated by a connection of his own house ; the royal family of Egypt were carried to Bagdad ; and there, in the person of Senan, who had been hurled from the throne, the dynasty of the Tholonides ended. It was held by the dangerous tenure of usurpation, and was destroyed after it had lasted about thirty-seven years.^c

^c D'Herbelot, titres Motaz, Motemed, and Deguignes, tom ii, livre 9.

CHAP. III.

*The Fatimites. . . . The Emir al Omra. . . .
Violent commotions and changes at Bag-
dad. . . . The Fatimites gain possession of
Egypt. . . . The frantic proceedings of Ha-
hem, caliph of Egypt. . . . Tagrul Bey. . . .
His power at Bagdad. . . . The Fatimite
caliphs gradually lose their power, as those
of Bagdad did.*

THE caliphs of this dynasty are de-
nominated Alides, as supposed to
have sprung from Ali ; Ishmaelans, un-
der the idea of their belonging to a col-
lateral branch of the family ; and Obeid-
ites, from the name of their founder.
Many, and especially the Abbassides,
denied them the honour of belonging
to the race of Mohammed ; but they
claimed for themselves the title of Fati-
mites, as the descendants of Fatima, the

wife of Ali, and the daughter of the prophet. It would be unbecoming the truth of history to speak with certainty concerning objects so remote, and connections so difficult to be traced.

But, in those times of enterprise and distant wanderings, a branch of the family of Mohammed might travel into Africa, and there rise to eminence; and what is thus probable in itself is confirmed by the history of facts. In the strife between the house of Ali and that of Moawiah, the Sherifs, or immediate connections of the prophet, suffered many things. Two of them, Edris and Soliman, fled from the scene of danger, and, accompanied by some friends, settled in Magreb, or the west of Africa. There Edris, or a descendant of the same name, founded the dynasty of the Edrisites, and, A. D. 789, built the city Fez.

Obeidallah, belonging to a tribe on the mountains of Mauritania, near Fez, and probably one of the Edrisites, dis-

covered a spirit of enterprise ; and, A.D. 882, first drew upon his family the public attention.

About the year 903, the territories of the Aglabites, in Africa, were thrown into confusion ; and Abdallah, a competitor for the throne, put to flight Ziadetallah, the reigning prince, and obtained the chief government for himself. But he did not enjoy long the fruits of his ambition ; for Obeidallah, the probable Edrisite, or descendant of Mohammed, A.D. 908, overpowered the forces of Abdallah, put their chief to death, and finished the dynasty of the Aglabites, in the 108 year after its establishment.^a

A. D. 908, and A. H. 296.—Thus began the dynasty of the Fatimites. Obeidallah assumed the title of Imim and caliph ; and built a new city, which he called Mahadia, in reference to his own surname Mahadi. The descendants of

^a Deguignes, tom i, part 2, livre 6.

Ali only are considered, by the Persians, as the genuine representatives of the great prophet; whereas the Turks maintain, that Abubeker, Omar, and Othman, were true Imims, as well as caliphs. For, by the nature of the Mohammedan government, the caliph, or vicar of the prophet, combined in his person, as Mohammed himself did, the sacred office of pontiff, as well as emperor of the states. The followers of Mohammed are separated into many sects, yet they may be viewed in two great divisions: the Turks, who assume to themselves the name of orthodox, or Sonnites, because, as a supplement to the Coran, they admit the Sonna, or book of traditions; and the Persians, who follow Ali, reject the Sonna, and are therefore denominated Shutes, or schismatics.^k

Obeidallah Mahadi also grasped the Aglabite possessions in Sicily; and, casting a wishful eye towards Egypt, he sent

^k Sale's Coran. prelim. dis. sect. 8.

Habasa to conquer that country. This general penetrated into Barca, and with triumph reached the walls of Alexandria ; but here he was overawed by resistance ; and Cayem, the son of Obeidallah, was sent to support him. The troops of Bagdad, commanded by Munas, bravely defended the city ; and the army, as well as the fleet, of the Fatimites, being conquered, the son of Obeidallah fled into the interior of his father's kingdom. About this time, too, Egypt was exposed to incursions, not only from the Fatimites, but also from the Greeks of Constantinople, and the Mohammedans of Spain.^c

A. D. 903.--Obeidallah died, after a reign of somewhat more than twenty-four years ; and we now find his son Cayem upon the throne of Mahadia, which his father had prepared. But, notwithstanding every precaution which

^c Al Makin, p. 187, &c. ; Renaudot, Hist. Pat. p. 352, 353.

was employed to render the beginning of this reign calm and fortunate, yet there sprung up a powerful rival in the person of Abujezed. His mother was an Ethiopian slave, but he had risen to some importance at the court of Obeidallah ; and, having drawn into his views a number of associates, he took Tunis, possessed himself of Cairwan, and at last shut up the Fatimite caliph in the citadel of Mahadia. There he languished in all the horrors of neglect and famine, till the friendly hand of death put an end to his sorrows.

During the dreary hours of confinement and affliction, he had time to reflect ; and his thoughts must have been bitter, when he raised them from his own sorrows to some of those cruelties which he had committed while in the career of his power. The island of Sicily was nominally in the power of the Fatimites ; but it did not bear the yoke with patience, and was for many years in a revolutionary state.

Cayem Bamrillah brought it into subjection; and we trust that his treatment of the vanquished inhabitants ought not to be considered as a true specimen of his general spirit and conduct.

He not only ordered a number of the prisoners to be sent, as slaves, to Cairwan; but the vessel, in which they were embarked, sunk in the passage, and the whole were lost. It is suggested, on the records of history, that while Cayem was desirous, on the one hand, of removing some of the most turbulent spirits from Sicily, he was afraid, on the other, that they might encourage discontentment in his own kingdom; and therefore that a private order was given to let them perish by the way.^h

Soon after Cayem Bamrillah was acknowledged caliph of Mahadia, Abulabbas Radi was placed upon the throne of Bagdad; but the divisions to which we have formerly adverted had so shaken

^h Abulfed. vol. ii, p. 309, &c.

the throne, and the pretenders to power were so numerous, that the caliph knew not where to seek protection, nor find relief. His vizer was not able, in so great a storm, to guide, with certainty, the vessel of the state; and therefore, to support him in so alarming a crisis, the caliph formed a new office, with uncommon powers. The person to be placed in this situation, was to be called the Emir al Omra, or commander of the commanders, who was to have almost an unlimited management of affairs, both civil and military. Abubeker Mohammed Ben Raik was the person nominated to this dangerous and important trust.^f

For sometime past, the powers of the eastern caliph scarcely extended beyond the walls of Bagdad; and, as he had formerly been under the usurping influence of the Turkish militia, so he was now subject to the constituted autho-

^f Abulfed, vol. ii, p. 323, &c. and p. 403, &c.

rity of the Emir al Omra. We have seen that the dynasty of the Tholonides was quite overthrown, A. D. 905; and, for the space of thirty years, Egypt was again subject to the court of Bagdad. But it, as well as all the other parts of the Mohammedan empire, was shaken by faction, and convulsed by foreign and domestic violence. Soon after Radi was seated on the throne of Bagdad, he replaced, in the government of Egypt, Abubeker Mohammed, who had been nominated to that office by the preceding caliph, but afterwards superseded. Mohammed was the son of Tagage, who was a Turkish slave; but, as he professed to belong to the Fergana, which was a country of the Turks, he adopted the surname Ikshid, which was the appellation given to the kings of the country from which his father had been brought.

A. D. 935. A. H. 324.—Ikshid was refused admittance into Egypt, by Ahmed, whom he was appointed to supersede;

and when this governor was obliged to surrender his station, he fled to the Fatimite caliph at Mahadia. There he easily persuaded Cayem Bamrillah to send hostile troops towards the borders of Egypt; but Ikshid effectually stopped their progress, and thus got quiet possession of his province. Knowing the enfeebled condition of the court at Bagdad, and delighted with the exercise of power, he declared himself an independent prince; held Egypt as a kingdom in his own right; and extended his dominions into Syria.

Ben Raik, the Emir al Omra of Bagdad, saw this revolt with deep-felt rage; and, in the plenitude of his power, entered Syria. Badrah, the lieutenant of Ikshid, fled before the army of Ben Raik; and the news of the defeat were communicated in haste to the new sovereign of Egypt. Ikshid immediately marched with troops to resist the power of his enemy; and, after ineffectual measures of accommodation, a battle

was fought at Al Arish, from which the Emir al Omra retreated with great loss. A treaty was then made, by which Ikshid was acknowledged in the sovereignty of Egypt, and the western part of Syria, as far as Ramla. The rest of that country was to be held by the caliphs of Bagdad, and for the part of Syria which the sovereign of Egypt retained, he was to pay annually to the caliph 40,000 pieces of gold.

But the Emir al Omra, Abubeker Ben Raik had not long enjoyment, either of his dignity, or the fruits of his arrangement with the prince of Egypt; for, by the convulsions of the state, he was thrust down to a private station. At the time when the office of Emir al Omra was instituted, the civil powers of the caliph were acknowledged to be few and of small extent; but the new minister, in the exercise of his paramount authority, stripped him of all influence in the state, except that which was attached to him as Imam, or pontiff of

the Mohammedan religion. But the office of Emir al Omra not being hereditary, and the caliph of Bagdad, who had the appointment, not being able to make his will respected, we find an important and newly created office left open for intrigue and ambition.

A. D. 937.—Ben Raik was deposed from the office of Emir al Omra; and Jakem, being one of the powerful Turks about the throne of the caliph, was raised by his countrymen to that important place. For the Turkish militia, who had usurped, and long directed, the affairs of the state, could not tamely bear to be denuded of the privileges which they had so long enjoyed. To counteract, therefore, the authority of the Emir al Omra, and bend it to their own views, they determined to exercise their remaining power, by raising to that dignified station a person whom they could trust, and perhaps command. But Jakem had not been in office fully three

years, when he was put to death by some of the rival factions.

Upon this event, A. D. 941, Abuabdallah Baridi, who possessed some neighbouring independent governments, seized upon the office of Emir al Omra, and drove from Bagdad the caliph Moe-tafi, or Mottaki Billah.

In this situation of distress, the caliph solicited the aid of Naseraldoulah,^f a prince of the Hamadanites, whose royal residence was at Mossul. Baridi could not stand before the power of this prince; and Naseraldoulah was himself created Emir al Omra.

During the short interval, between the death of Jakem, and the appointment of Naseraldoulah, two persons seem to have enjoyed, for a very short time, the office of Emir al Omra. They appear to have been raised up by the contending powers at Bagdad, and placed in authority to oppose Baridi, while the caliph

^f Nasereddoulet.

was seeking redress at Mossul. The first of them was Curtegen, a Dilemite; but he was put to death, when he had held the office only 80 days. The second was Ben Raik, who, being recalled from banishment, had scarcely been invested a second time with the emblems of office, when he also was cut off by a cabal in the state. After the death of those high commanders, Naseraldoulah took his seat at Bagdad, as the Emir al Omra.

But, having been placed in that situation by the will of the caliph, he was hostile to the Turkish militia and the courtiers about the throne; and therefore he was not allowed to remain in office for more than the space of three months. When he was removed from the chair of authority, Tozun, a Turk of the palace, was created, by his countrymen, Emir al Omra, or supreme director. From the violence of this Turkish governor the caliph fled, and threw himself again under the protection of

the Hamadanites. As Abu Moham-med Hassan, the prince of Mossul, was honoured with the surname of Naseral-doulah, or protector of the state, when he formerly gave assistance to the caliph Mottaki, so now, in defending the same personage, he joined with him his brother Abulhassan Ali, upon whom the caliph bestowed the name of Seifaldoulah,^h or the sword of the state.

But Tozun had so fortified himself in strength, that he put their whole efforts to defiance. The troops of Bagdad even forced these Hamadanite princes to retire from Mossul; and at this critical period Ikshid, the sovereign of Egypt, passed from Syria to Racca, upon the Euphrates, and offered his best services in behalf of the caliph. Tozun, like every other tyrant and usurper, was afraid of his own authority; and, that the caliph might not be restored to that power which would deprive him of his

^h Or Seifeddoulet.

office of Emir al Omra, he persuaded Mottaki to return to Bagdad, and trust in his people. This confidential return was effected by the most solemn assurances of sincerity and truth on the part of Tozun; but no sooner was the caliph in his power, than he deposed him from his office, and put Mostahfi Billah in his place.^a

Ikshid returned toward Egypt; but Seifaldoulah, who held him as an enemy, marched against his possessions in Syria, and took both Aleppo and Damascus. At the former of these cities Seifaldoulah fixed his royal residence; and as his brother Naseraldoulah reigned at Mossul, so did he at Aleppo. After a variety of hostile proceedings between Seifaldoulah and Ikshid, they entered into a solemn treaty of peace; and, as a further pledge of friendship, the former married the daughter of the latter. But this calm of mutual agreement was of short dura-

^a Abulpharaj. p. 198, &c.

tion ; for Aleppo was retaken by Ikshid, and it continued frequently to change masters, till it was finally incorporated with the Turkish empire.

A. D. 946.—Ikshid, the sovereign of Egypt, died, and left his kingdom to his son Abulcassem Abuhûr. Ikshid was brave in the field, and his military life was successful ; but in private life he was timid to excess. It does not appear that he was uncommonly tyrannical in his temper ; and yet his conduct betrayed a disquieting consciousness, and unaccountable apprehensions. When in the field, he never slept two nights together in the same tent ; and, when residing in his palace, it was seldom known in what apartment he was to be found.^b

Scarcely had a year elapsed, from the time that Tozun deposed the caliph Mottaki, when the Emir al Omra was forced to surrender the darling objects

^b Abulpharaj. p. 203 ; and Abulfed. vol. ii, p. 393, &c.

of his ambition, and yield to the power of death. Zairac Ben Shirazad, another Turk, succeeded to his office, but his increased violence and cruelty soon exhausted the patience of those who were enemies to the Turkish power. They were chiefly the same party who had supported the interests of Baridi; and they now applied for deliverance and protection to a prince of the Bowides.

The progenitor of the Bowides was a poor fisherman, whose name was Buiah or Bowiah. He had three sons, Ali, Hassan, and Ahmed, who were animated with the spirit of ambition and enterprise. To this, perhaps, they were directed by the revolutionary temper of the times in which they lived; and, we may presume, their minds were somewhat tinctured with royal ambition, when their father told them, that, though poor, he was sprung from the Sassanidean dynasty of Persian kings. These young men went into the service of va-

rious independent princes ; and, having acquired the sovereignty of different provinces and nations, the dynasty of the Bowides was established by them in Persia.

It was in the year of our Lord 945 that they were invited to Bagdad ; and Ahmed, the youngest of the brothers, was sent to overthrow the Turkish power. Before this far-famed son of Buiah, the Emir al Omra, Ben Shirazad, and his partizans, fled. They carried in their train the caliph Mostacfi ; but, when Ahmed was in full possession of the city, the caliph returned and embraced him as his deliverer. He ordered the name of Ahmed to be mentioned in the public prayers, and stamped upon the coin of the realm.

He conferred upon him the title of Moezaldoulah, or the prosperity of the state. To his brother Ali he gave that of Amadaldoulah, the support of the nation ; and on Hassan he bestowed Roknaldoulah, or the pillar of the state.

Notwithstanding these marks of favour, which were lavished by the caliph, Moezaldoulah, in the office of Emir al Omra, put out the eyes of his patron Mostacfi, deprived him of the semblance of power which he possessed, and appointed to the caliphate Mothi Billah, the son of Moctader. Three branches of the Bowides sprung from the three brothers whom we have mentioned, and made a considerable figure in the history of the east.^a

Ikshid, the prince of Egypt, left two sons, both under age. The elder of them, Abulcassem Abuhûr, was seated upon the throne; but Cafur, who had been a trusty general in the wars of his father, took upon him the regency of the kingdom. Cafur was an Ethiopian slave, who possessed those strong mental powers which gained him his freedom, and the favour of Ikshid. Seifaldoulah, presuming upon the weakness of an in-

^a Abulpharaj. p. 203, 204; D'Herbelot, titre Buiah.

fant reign, took Damascus, which belonged to the kingdom of Egypt ; but Cafur, with his usual expedition and vigour, attacked Seifaldoulah, and compelled him to seek refuge in the interior of the country. During the fourteen years of Abuhûr's reign in Egypt, he appears to have been constantly under the direction of Cafur ; but the events of that period are not particularly recorded.

A. D. 961.—Abuhûr died, and left the kingdom to his brother Abulhassun Ali ; but, being also a youth, he too was subject to Cafur, who continued to be regent of the kingdom. While the government of Egypt was thus situated, the Greeks of Constantinople entered Syria ; and, among other efforts of success, took possession of Aleppo. Though Seifaldoulah, the lord of that city, was hostile to the Ikshidites, yet, to preserve their own territories in Syria, they joined him in repelling the foreign invaders. Egypt about this time was distressed by

famine as well as foreign enemies ; and there does not appear to have been the most perfect agreement between Cafur and Ali. But, A. D. 966, the young prince was removed from the anxieties of the world ; and, by the approbation of the caliph of Bagdad, who still had influence as the Imam of the Moslems, the regent Cafur took the royal seat.

Cafur reigned in Egypt somewhat more than two years ; and, having died, was succeeded by Ahmed, the son of Ali ; but he was only in the eleventh year of his age, and his government was but nominal ; for Egypt was still agitated within, and threatened from without. For some time past, the Fatimite caliphs of Mahadia had been making successful inroads into the kingdom of Egypt ; and, when Cafur died, Moez Ledinillah, who was then on the African throne, made a grand effort to crush the powers of Egypt, which were then weak and distracted. His celebrated general, Jauhar, found easy access into the coun-

try, defeated the Egyptian factions, and commanded the name of his master to be pronounced in the public prayers. The conquest of the Egyptian possessions in Syria soon followed; and thus fell the dynasty of the Ikshidites, after it had existed in Egypt about thirty-four years.^b

Egypt became subject to the Fatimite caliphs in the year 969; but some time elapsed before the public affairs were so arranged as to allow Moez Ledinillah to transfer his government to the newly acquired country. In A. H. 358, A. D. 972, he left Mahadia, or, as some say, Mansura, a town which his father had built, and then took up his abode in a city which his victorious general Jauhar had begun to erect near Al Fostat.

This new and rising city was called Kahira, or Cahira, from the Arabic word Caher, which signifies Mars, under

^b Abulpharaj. p. 205, &c.; Al Makin, p. 229; and D'Herbelot, titre Moez Ledinillah.

whose auspices, in the astrology of Egypt, the town was supposed to have been built, in token of victory. It then became the capital of Egypt, has still continued its importance as a city, and is now known by the name of Grand Cairo. Ledinillah was not fortunate with respect to the affairs of Syria. In Egypt every thing was quiet ; but in Syria all was confusion. His troops, however, were successful in securing the ancient Egyptian dominions in that part of the world ; but in the taking of Damascus, much of the city was laid in ruins.

The caliph of Bagdad, in his capacity of Imam, had hitherto been acknowledged in Egypt ; but Moez Ledinillah forbid his name to be mentioned in the mosques ; and the caliph of Egypt was acknowledged as legitimate successor of Mohammed. He was received as such by the people of Medina ; and even Mecca, laying aside its resistance, bowed to his authority. Moez Ledinillah having reigned in Africa and Egypt

about twenty-three years, died with the character of a just and benevolent man.

When Moez Ledinillah had determined to leave his kingdom in the west, and take up his royal residence in Egypt, he saw that his father's dominions in Africa could not be preserved as an immediate part of his empire, and therefore he bestowed them upon a neighbouring prince, to be held upon the condition of an annual tribute. The person upon whom he conferred this favour was Abulfutah Yoseph, or Joseph, the son of Zeri. When the Ethiopians subdued the Hemiarites, and took possession of Yeman, a prince of the denuded royal family fled to Africa, and there obtained independent states. Joseph, to whom Moez Ledinillah resigned his western dominions, and also the island of Sicily, was a descendant of the Arabian prince who left the disasters and subjugation of Yeman. Thus the dynasty of the Zeirides, which began in the person of Zeri, was more complete-

ly established by the extensive territories which the Fatimite caliph transferred to Abulfutah.*

A. D. 975.—Abumansur Azis Billah, being but a young man at the death of his father, anxiously surveyed the difficulties of his station, and trembled at the preparations of war, which were numerous throughout the empire. He felt his experience too small for the vastness of the national affairs; and he committed the direction of the public business to Jauhar, the veteran and successful general of his father. Under the direction of this prudent and faithful guide, the threatenings of Egypt were easily allayed; but the possessions in Syria required wisdom and vigour.

Azedaldoulah had succeeded his father Moezaldoulah in the office of Emir al Omra at the court of Bagdad; and, by the weakness of his administration,

* Abulpharaj. p. 209; et D'Herbelot, titre Moez Ledinillah.

the aspiring Turks, in that city, had recruited their strength. When they found themselves possessed of sufficient power, they deprived Azedaldoulah of his office, and compelled him to leave the city. In these humiliating circumstances of his lot, he applied for assistance to Adaldoulah, who reigned in Persia. Before the united strength of these princes, the Turkish militia fled from Bagdad; but Azedaldoulah reaped no benefit from that victory. His cousin Adaldoulah soon grasped in his power the possession of Bagdad; and Azedaldoulah, in attempting to recover his office, was unfeelingly put to death.

Upon being compelled to quit Bagdad, the ambitious Turks entered Syria, and made successful incursions into various parts of that country. About the time that Azis Billah was declared to be caliph of Egypt, those Turkish invaders had possessed themselves of Damascus, and most of the Egyptian dominions in Syria. Jauhar, with the well-

founded confidence of a veteran commander, marched into Syria, and opened trenches before Damascus; but the Turks were in great strength, and the Egyptian general was compelled to raise the siege. He retired to Tiberias, and thence to Ramla, where he was so severely pressed, that he was only permitted to depart upon the humiliating condition of passing under the lance of the Turkish general.

Having arrived in Egypt, he persuaded the caliph to go into Syria; and, at the head of his own armies, to engage the enemy. In pursuance of this plan, Azis Billah met the Turks at Ramla; and such was the terror of the day, and so manifold the danger, that Aftekin, the general of the Turks, fled from the field of battle; but he was taken in the flight, and delivered to the Egyptian caliph. The prisoner was conveyed to Grand Cairo, and treated in a humane and friendly manner. But Jauhar experienced how uncertain is fame, and

how fleeting the glory of conquest. Even under the reign of Azis Billah, a mild and beneficent prince, when the laurels of victory faded on the brow of Jauhar, he was deprived of his station, and suffered all the neglects of misfortune.^d

If favour and power are precarious in every situation, they are peculiarly uncertain in revolutionary and despotic governments. Yacub, or Jacob, the vizer of Azis Billah, had acquired great wealth; and it was suggested to the caliph, that the riches had been obtained by fraud and oppression. Azis Billah was fired with indignation, and, having cast the vizer himself into prison, he also treated with severity his more immediate friends and associates. During these proceedings against Jacob and his connections, all Cairo was in commotion, and the vizer, with his fellow-sufferers, were restored to their liberty and pos-

^d Al Makin, p. 233, &c.; Abulpharaj. Hist. dynast. p. 209, &c.; et D'Herbelot, titre Thai Billah.

sessions. To Jacob was Ledinillah considerably indebted for his success in obtaining the kingdom of Egypt.

That caliph in gratitude raised him to a place of trust and importance in the state ; and he had acted in the capacity of vizer to Azis Billah, till the late manifestation of the caliph's displeasure. It does not appear that he was ever restored to his office ; but the caliph visited him on his death-bed, and at his funeral exhibited marks of respect. Azis Billah was mild and forbearing toward those who differed from him in matters of religion ; he employed, and put trust in men of probity and discretion, whether they were Jews, Christians, or Mohammedans ; and discovered himself to be a wise and pacific prince.^c

A. D. 996.—The caliph having died, his son, Abu Ali Mansur, took the reins

^c Al Makin, p. 243, &c. ; et Renaudot. Hist. Pat. p. 337, &c.

of government into his hand, and assumed the name of Hakem Bamrillah. This prince was but in the eleventh year of his age; and, when his father, in the prospect of a speedy dissolution, appointed him to the kingdom, he also committed the superintendence of the government to Arjuan Marghevan. This person was a well-known servant of the royal household, and the prudence of his conduct was distinctly shewn by the order and peace which prevailed in the kingdom during the whole period of his regency. But no sooner had Hakem taken the management of public affairs into his own hands, than all was confusion, and the very throne itself was shaken.

A. D. 1006.—At this period a descendant of the house of Ommiah took up arms against the caliph of Egypt. His real name was Walid, but he was commonly known by the appellation of Abu Racwah,^f or the father of the bottle,

^f Or Abu Rawak.

because, in leathern bags or bottles, he himself carried water for the supply of his attendants. The name, however, which he assumed, was Nayer Bamrillah. Whether he fixed upon this servile manner of life to get more easy access to the multitude, or whether his situation in society was really humble, is neither important nor clearly ascertained; but his mind soared into the regions of fancy and ambition.

He began his career by preaching in the streets, and loudly required the people to repent. Having thus gained a character of disinterested sanctity, he had the minds of the Egyptian multitude at his disposal, and he eagerly employed them for promoting his views. He converted the superstitious throng into an army of soldiers; and, before the caliph was aware, he had Upper Egypt and Barca at his devotion. In this alarming posture of affairs, Hakem Bamrillah collected his troops, and, having put the rebels to flight, beheaded their

leader, and put an end to the insurrection.^g

A. D. 1011.—Cader Billah, the caliph of Bagdad, having long been indignant at the eminence in which the Fatimite caliphs of Egypt stood, renewed, with increased virulence, the assertions and proofs that they were not descended from Ali and Fatima. Cader was artfully directed, and had these proceedings signed and attested by undoubted descendants of the prophet's house. Though jealous rage had rankled for a while in the breast of the eastern caliphs, yet the immediate occasion of these violent declarations, was an imprudent order of Hakem Bamrillah, that he should be publicly prayed for in all the mosques of Mossul and Cufa.

The caliph of Egypt appears to have made this rash and unfortunate demand from the Ocailites, an Arabian tribe,

^g Al Makin, p. 255, &c.; et Abulfeda in Chron. A. D. 397.

who, some time previous to this event, got possession of Mossul, Cufa, and Anbar. About the same time, too, he solicited Mohammed, a prince of the Gaznerides, to acknowledge him as the true pontiff of the Muslemans. The caliph of Bagdad considered these attempts as an infringement of his prerogative, and a prelude to more serious encroachments. The conduct of the reigning powers of Bagdad was calculated to make a deep impression upon the influence of the Egyptian caliphs, because the manifesto was industriously circulating throughout all the provinces of the Mohammedan government. Full of rage and indignation, Hakem Bamrillah published invectives against the Abbassidian caliphs, and, with much dexterity, warded off the force of their strong accusations.^h

These aspiring pretensions of the Egyptian caliph, which brought upon him so serious an attack, appear to have

^h Al Makin, p. 257 ; et Deguignes, tom. i, livre 6.

been the first risings of that folly and extravagance which degraded his character, and sunk him in the estimation of the world. Sometimes he favoured the Jews and Christians, and at other times distressed them: at one time he ordered the synagogues and churches to be pulled down, and at another to be rebuilt. In one of those ebullitions of rage, which were encouraged by Hakem, the influence of it extended to his Syrian dominions, and the church of Calvary, or the resurrection, was destroyed. The sepulchre where Jesus lay was spitefully violated, and its very existence attempted to be taken away.

When his imprudent and destructive conduct was held forth to ridicule and detestation, he commanded the whole city of Grand Cairo to be plundered and destroyed. Previously he had ordered that the shops should be splendidly illuminated, and commanded the women not to appear in the streets. Now the whole city was set in flames; and

the caliph refused to issue his authority for extinguishing the fire.

In the progress of madness and impiety, Hakem aspired to divine honours, and produced a catalogue of many adherents. Amidst the workings of this extravagance and frenzy, Darar, a visionary, and a pretended prophet, made his appearance. His incoherent ravings suited the distempered mind of Hakem, and their frantic zeal was mutually inflamed. Darar supported the caliph in his most intemperate ravings; and that Hakem might be the sole object of adoration in his dominions, the national festivals were interdicted; pilgrimages forbidden; and the Mohammedan religion was threatened with destruction.

But this was not all; the most licentious doctrines were promulgated, and the very bands of civil society torn asunder. Amid these scenes of horror, which were promoted and sanctioned from the throne, the deluded, or designing, Darar was put to death. But the pernicious

sentiments were not instantly suppressed.

Destruction was stalking abroad in its most awful form, and nothing could resist its progress while the banner of royal approbation was waving over it. But Settalmulca, the sister of the caliph, resolved to stop the devastation, by cutting off its source, which was in the throne of the kingdom. An assassin was provided ; and Hakem Bamrillah was destined to fall. In the ravings of his disordered imagination, he frequently spent whole nights in retirement ; and, upon Mount Mocattem, indulged his fancy in pretended intercourse with Heaven. He laid aside his robes of majesty, clothed himself in black ; and, in token of humility, rode upon an ass. Ben Dawas, the assassin, had procured the poinard, and, his mind being prepared for blood, the caliph with his attendants were soon cut off.ⁱ To deliver Egypt from unequal-

ⁱ Al Makin, p. 258 ; et D'Herbelot, titre Hakem.

led cruelty, and to free the world from a monster of guilt, was an event much to be desired; but to have it performed by the unseen hand of secret murder, appalled the mind, destroyed confidence, and placed alarm in every path. But that treachery should spring from a female heart, and that the poinard should be whetted by a sister's hand, gave assassination its most horrid shape, chilled every chord of affection, and sapped the foundation of mutual trust.

A. D. 1021.—Abulhassan Daher Lezazdinillah was but seven years of age when his father was cut off; and his aunt, Settalmulca, directed the affairs of state. She conducted the whole concerns of government with a steady hand, but died in the course of four years. The reign of Daher was extended to somewhat more than fifteen years, and yet, during that period, nothing of importance appears to have happened within the whole realm of Egypt. But if we look toward Spain, the affairs of

that kingdom underwent a considerable change. The spirit of discord, which at first rent the empire of Mohammed, continued to trouble and distract the various parts into which it was divided. An unhappy collision sprung up in the house of Ommiah; and, A. D. 1027, the dynasty of that family was destroyed in Spain.^k

A. D. 1036.—We find Abu Tamin Maad next in succession among the caliphs of Egypt. He was the son of Daher, and took the name of Mostanser Billah. At the time of his accession, he was scarcely nine years of age; but who assisted him in the management of the state is not recorded in the annals of the country. Though Egypt appears to have continued tranquil and loyal, yet some of his possessions in the east were agitated and rebellious.

A. D. 1051.—Hitherto the Turks, who had established dynasties in the east,

^k Abulpharaj. p. 221; Roderic. Tolat. c. 30 & 31, &c.

were slaves who obtained their freedom, and, amid the tumults of states, had acquired power and risen to eminence; but the Seljucides were a colony of Turks who left their native country in a body, and settled in Persia and Asia Minor. At first they lived in a pastoral state, feeding their flocks and their herds; but possessing much martial spirit, they gradually acquired extensive territories; and, in the progress of events, weakened the dynasty of the Gaznerides. The affairs of Bagdad still continued in great confusion; still there was a struggle for power; and still the caliph was but a prisoner at large in the city of Bagdad.

There was a Turkish slave of the palace of Bagdad, by name Nassasiri, who became so powerful at court, that his name was mentioned along with the caliph's in the public prayers. But, increasing in presumption and violence, he was firmly opposed by Malek Abraham, the Emir al Omra. Having fled

from Bagdad, he went into Egypt, and sought assistance, in addition to that which he could command from the Ocaïlite Arabs of Mossul, Cufa, and Anbar. With a train of numerous allies, he returned into the east, and subdued many important districts in the neighbourhood of Bagdad. Among these was the Arabian Irac, which belonged to Abraham, the Emir al Omra. The territories of that prince having been so grievously assailed, and Bagdad threatened by hostile invaders, the caliph and his whole court trembled in the palace.¹

Among the aspiring warriors of the Seljucides, Togrul Beg, or Bey,^m was conspicuous and successful. He made extensive inroads into the empire of the Gaznerides, and was a great warrior, as well as a successful prince. To him Cayem Bamrillah, the caliph of Bagdad, applied for deliverance from the state

¹ Al Makin, p. 260, &c.; et D'Herbelot, titre Cayem Bamrillah de Bagdad.

^m The Tagrolipax of the Greeks.

of captivity in which he was placed, and from the increasing fears to which he was exposed. As soon as the state of his affairs would allow, Togrul marched with joy to Bagdad, for he had long been anxious to grace his triumphs with the conquest of that venerable city. He directed his first efforts to suppress the power of the Emir al Omra.

This was an important and necessary measure to give liberty to the caliph; but it was also intended as a previous step for his own elevation. Malek al Rahim, the Emir al Omra, was cast into prison, which afforded Togrul Bey an easy opportunity of seizing on that prince's dominions, and of putting an end to the dynasty of the Bowides, which had existed for 122 years.

A. D. 1055.—Though Togrul Bey did not accept the name of Emir al Omra, which had become detestable, yet he enjoyed all the powers of that high office. In this season of favour and friendship, the caliph married Cadija, the sister

of Togrul Bey, and that conqueror continued for a while to rejoice in the happiness which prevailed in Bagdad. But while he was thus employed at Bagdad, Nassasiri was busily engaged, at a distance, in pursuing measures for his own aggrandisement, and the disappointment of Togrul Bey. The successful machinations of his enemies roused Togrul from his dream of pleasure, and he hastened into the provinces of his empire, to allay the discontents, and encrease his possessions.

While he was absent on this expedition, the army of Nassasiri entered the city of Bagdad on both sides of the Tigris. They displayed the banners of Egypt, and Mostanser Billah, the caliph of Grand Cairo, was proclaimed emperor of the faithful. From this obvious and pressing danger, the prince of Bagdad hastened with precipitation, and abandoned his throne. As a mark of allegiance to the caliph of Egypt, prayers were offered up for him in all the

mosques of Bagdad ; and Nassasiri professed to be acting only on his account. The ambition of Nassasiri was indeed directed toward the highest honours ; but it was necessary for a while to conceal his intentions.

He had received effectual aid from the Egyptian caliph ; and it was an imposing shew of gratitude to place him at the head of the Mohammedan empire. In this manner he also ingratiated himself with the people of Bagdad, who had suffered so long by the weakness of their caliph, and the unbounded ambition of those about the court. But those projects of Nassasiri were of short duration, and the schemes of his half-formed power were broken by the thunder of Togrul Bey's approach. That celebrated general had subdued his revolted subjects, and returned to Bagdad terrible in power.

Nassasiri had stained his short career by acts of violence and inhumanity ; but his cruelty was soon obscured by the

dark shades of Togrul Bey's revenge. However merciful may have been the general tenor of his conduct, his steps in moving toward Bagdad foreboded terror, and the arm of his fury was made bare. The city was given up to plunder; and who can tell the horrors of the day? The shrieks of despair, and the groans of the dying, have long been wafted into the regions of forgetfulness; and why should we attempt to record the immensity of the plunder, or the extent of the woe? Amid the ruins and desolation of the city, Cayem Bamrillah, the caliph of Bagdad, was reconducted to the throne; but his heart could not beat high with self-gratulation, when every thing around him was clothed in mourning.

Nassasiri fled toward Waset, and was either killed in a battle between that place and Cufa, or perished as he fled in the hour of discomfiture. His head was carried to Togrul Bey, and exposed on a pike in the streets of Bagdad.

When tranquillity and confidence were restored in that city, Togrul Bey approached the caliph with the most profound respect, and clothed his ambition with pretended reverence for the successor of Mohammed. The caliph received him with much gratitude, and forbade the usual prostrations of humility and respect. He girt upon his thigh the sword of power, and the dynasty of the Seljucides was acknowledged in Bagdad.ⁿ

A. D. 1057.—Togrul Bey was desirous of cementing still more closely the union which subsisted between him and the caliph of Bagdad; and, for this purpose, solicited his daughter in marriage. The sultan, for so Togrul Bey was now denominated, had no apprehension of meeting with a refusal, and was therefore astonished when Cayem Bamrillah objected to the proposal; but the ca-

ⁿ D'Herbelot, titre Cayem Bamrillah de Bagdad, et Deguignes, tom. ii, livre 10.

liph's ideas of family connections and Moslem blood were different from those of the Seljoke prince.

It is true, that Cayem Bamrillah had placed Cadija, a Turkish princess, among the number of his wives; but he believed, that he thereby had raised her rank, and qualified her to be his companion; but if his daughter Seida were connected in marriage with a barbarian and infidel, though ranked in the list of princes, she must degrade her family dignity. It was allowable for a Mohammedan prince to admit even a slave into his seraglio; but a princess, descended from the prophet of Mecca, must maintain her rank, and preserve the honour of her family. These, however, were words of vanity and high-sounding tones which the degraded caliph could not support. He was apparently the master, but in reality the slave, of Togrul Bey.

Upon the new lord of Bagdad, Cayem Bamrillah was dependant, not only for

protection, but also for revenues to maintain the pageantry of power which he was still permitted to display. The sultan frowned at the caliph's unbending pride ; and having ordered his annual pension to be reduced, the humbled successor of Mohammed yielded a reluctant consent. The sultan retired with his bride into some of his distant abodes, to solemnize the marriage in retirement and peace ; but while he was arranging the nuptial preparations, the hand of death was secretly conveying him to the mansions of the grave. Suddenly was he seized by an alarming malady, and almost as suddenly was he cut off. His court was filled with mourning, and Seida returned sorrowing to Bagdad.^a

The whole of the east was now in a state of war ; and many of the countries had changed their masters. Upon

^a Al Makin, p. 271, &c. ; Abulpharaj. p. 226, &c. ; et D'Herbelot, titre Thogrul Beg.

the fall of Nassasiri, the Egyptian interest was destroyed at Bagdad; but Mostansur Billah appears to have employed the troops which he had in the east, in attempting to recover Aleppo, which was then included in the territory of the Hamadinites. About the year 1001 Lulu Al Caregi had seized upon Aleppo, and the young princes who were sons of Seidaldoulah, emir of that city, fled to Egypt, and sat under the protection of the caliph. During the agitated state of Syria, one of these refugees, Naseraldoulah, appeared in rebellion against the caliph, his protector.

The ungrateful prince was supported by a numerous body of Turkish troops, who, by the victories of the Seljucides, were moving westward in strong columns, notwithstanding the efforts both of the Greeks and Arabians. It was probably expected that Mostansur Billah would have used his interest, and employed his armies, to restore Aleppo to its rightful lord; but seeing that the

caliph of Egypt was desirous of recovering it for himself, as an ancient inheritance of his family, the Hamadinite prince drew the sword, and vowed revenge.

This young warrior, with a band of invaders, entered Egypt, carrying in his train all the desolations of war. They marched, amid cruelties and plunder, from Cairo to Alexandria, and from Alexandria to the desert of Suez. They appear to have been assisted by intestine enemies of the state ; and the vizer of Egypt's son was found among the rebels, and put to death. So alarming was the progress of the hostile troops, that the caliph was surrounded, and shut up in his palace ; but, recovering his liberty, he dispersed the enemy, and Nazardoulah, with his brother, suffered the punishment due to the ungrateful. By the death of these princes, the dynasty of the Hamadinites was totally overthrown.

The caliph of Egypt had hitherto been generally acknowledged in Syria ;

but the interest of the Seljucides increased, and that of the Fatimites gave way. Some of the Turkish invaders again entered Egypt, but were forced to retire into Syria.¹

In the meantime, Egypt was again oppressed by famine; for though it was the granary of nations, yet its produce sometimes failed, and misery ensued. In commercial countries, provisions, though scarce in one part, may, in general, be easily procured in another; but Egypt was not accustomed to depend upon resources in foreign nations; and if they had, the long continuation of hostilities which had deluged Asia and Europe, prevented the fields from bearing their natural increase. Pestilence, the common consequence of scarcity, engendered by unwholesome food, and cherished by poverty and wretchedness, mingled its dreadful ef-

¹ Al Makin, p. 276, &c.; Deguignes, tom. i, livre 6, et livre 5; et Renaudot, Hist. Pat. Alex. p. 433, &c.

fects with those which the famine had produced. Thus the effects of war, and the miseries of want and disease, excited compassion, and presented an ample field for the exercise of benevolence.

Mostansur Billah beheld the state of his country with awe and compassion; and his benevolent mind opened its stores of pity and beneficence. He exhausted his treasures, he disposed of his jewels, and he bestowed his flocks and his herds, for alleviating misery, and removing distress.

We have seen the successors of Mohammed, in the east, lose their power in the lap of indolence, become subject, first to their vizers, and then the slave of their Emir al Omra; and the same progress of encroachment had some time ago begun in Egypt. The prime ministers of the Fatimite caliphs were gradually rising into power, and rendering the master dependant upon the servant. Wearied out with foreign wars, harassed by civil dissensions, and af-

flicted with the misery of his subjects, the benevolent Mostansur Billah committed the whole management of public affairs to his favourite, the vizer Beder al Gemel, and retired to the endearments of private life, where he indulged his literary propensities, and exercised his poetic talents. Al Gemel was selfish and sordid; he oppressed the christians by severe taxes; he drew riches to himself from every source of the empire; and from the Ethiopians, who were connected with the christian churches in Egypt, he extorted money and valuable presents.^f

^f Renaudot, H'st. Pat. Alex. p. 451.

CHAP. IV.

The beginning of the crusades. . . . Peter the Hermit. . . . Jerusalem taken by the christians. . . . Wars between the christians of Jerusalem and the caliphs of Egypt. . . . Nurreddin. . . . The Fatimite dynasty destroyed.

A. D. 1094. **A**BULCASEM AHMED, the second son of Mostansur Billah, was raised to the caliphate upon the death of his father, and surnamed Mostali Billah. Historians report, that the oldest son, Nezar, had given offence to the all-powerful vizer, Beder al Gemel, and was therefore passed over in fixing a successor for the throne. About the time that Mostali became caliph of Egypt, the most powerful princes of Europe entered into a league to rescue Jerusalem from the Mohammedan

powers. But, to shew how the way was paved for the important consequences of that combination, we must mark in review some preceding transactions, both of the European and eastern nations.

The wide-spreading power of the Moslem kingdoms had long been the terror of other states; and the empire of Constantinople had essentially suffered by their proceedings. About the middle of the tenth century, when the Mohammedan empire was torn by factions, that of Constantinople began to renew its strength; and, by the successive efforts of Phocas and Zimisces, its contracted bounds were enlarged. The island of Crete was subdued, and a victorious course begun through Syria, and continued until it reached the eastern bank of the Euphrates.

The Normans, who had found their way into Italy, travelled onward through those regions, in hostile array; and, by a chain of fortunate adventures, assisted the Greeks to recover Sicily from the

Mohammedan powers. Dissatisfied with the division which the Greek general made of the spoils, the Normans returned in disgust, successfully invaded Apulia; and, in conjunction with the pope, attempted to expel the Greeks from Italy.

At this critical period, Robert, the Norman, displayed his martial abilities, and, on account of his discretion, he was surnamed Guiscard, which signifies the wise or discerning. Pope Nicholas II. created him duke of Apulia and Calabria, investing him, at the same time, with a right to retain and possess whatever he could conquer in Sicily or the Italian states.

A. D. 1060.—Roger, the youngest brother of Robert Guiscard, burst at once from obscurity, and spread around him the dazzling splendour of genius, courage, and success. Sicily had again reverted into the power of the Mohammedans; and, in remembrance of what the Normans had formerly done in that

island, and how they had been treated by the Greeks, he was desirous of getting into his possession what his family had unjustly lost. Therefore, toward that island he directed his hostile views; but it was not till the expiration of many years that he became completely master of Sicily. Several islands in the Mediterranean sea yielded to the arms and fame of this conqueror; and he even became the terror of Constantinople itself; but amid his successes and pursuits of ambition, he was seized with a violent distemper, which proved soon fatal.^c

About this time the whole region between Italy and Jerusalem was hostile to the western christians; and the city of Zion was then in the power of the Turks. The scene where Christ suffered, and the tomb where our Lord lay, excited an early interest in the followers of Jesus; and many of them

^c Abulpharaj. p. 242; et Annal. Baroni. A. D. 1590, &c.

went in pilgrimage to the Holy land. But what was at the first only an object of reverence and feeling was at length considered as a duty. When Constantine the Great became a christian, the city of Jerusalem belonged to the empire of Rome; and those who went to that holy city found protection and easy access. But the city of Jerusalem, we have found, was taken by the Saracens; and then the pilgrims were exposed to vexations and dangers. Bigotted as the Mohammedans were to the religion of their prophet, they did not forbid the christians to visit the Holy land; but they imposed a tribute, and granted a sullen permission. The path in which the pilgrims trode was thus a way through a land of strangers; and the people among whom they sojourned were hostile to the religion of Jesus. Feuds often sprung up, and the christians frequently suffered.

Al Rashid, who was the friend and ally of Charlemagne, permitted not only

the subjects of that prince, but the christians in general, to visit in safety the Holy land. He even granted them liberty to build houses of reception, for their accommodation and comfort at Jerusalem. But these princes were unavoidably carried down the common stream of time, and others swayed their sceptres with less greatness of mind and mutual esteem. Some Italian merchants of Amalphi procured leave from Mostansur Billah, the caliph of Egypt, to make favourable arrangements at Jerusalem for the comfort of their countrymen, and even to build a church in the Holy city.^m But, in the process of time, the Turks over-ran the Moslem empire of Bagdad, and, seizing upon Palestine, took Jerusalem from the Fatimites, and drove them from the Holy city.

A journey into distant regions is always perilous ; but the way from Europe

^m Will. Tyrensis, lib. ii, c. 6 ; et Jacob. de Obriaco, c. 64.

to Jerusalem became peculiarly dangerous. In the loosely-governed provinces of the Mohammedan empire, christian travellers were exposed to danger; but under the rude and unsettled government of the Turks, the pilgrims were not uncommonly plundered, and sometimes put to death. Those who arrived at Jerusalem, after a variety of sufferings, were destitute, and naked, and had not the means of finding access to the sepulchre of Jesus. There was a price to be paid, and they had nothing to offer. They were within the precincts of Jerusalem; but without money they were precluded from the place which was the object of their desire.

To be on the very verge of the sacred rock, and yet to be excluded from approaching it, filled them with distress. Disappointed and miserable, they felt all the anguish of despair, and their feelings were heightened by the unrelenting conduct of their foes. Such was the general situation of the christians,

both of the east and the west ; and they were deeply afflicted for Mount Calvary, which was possessed, and unregarded, by the followers of Mohammed.^f

A. D. 1095.—Peter of Amiens, in the province of Picardy, was brought up to arms, under the counts of Boulogne ; but he exchanged the din of war for the stillness of a hermitage ; and, to complete his religious conduct, he went in pilgrimage to the city of Jerusalem. What he suffered on his journey, historians do not relate ; but he saw the abject situation of the Holy land, and felt indignant. He opened the sorrows of his heart to Simeon, the pious patriarch ; but no redress was to be found. ‘ But I,’ said Peter, ‘ will raise the warlike nations of Europe, and deliver the Holy city.’

With letters of introduction from Simeon he hastened to Bari, and kissed

^f M. De Vertot. Hist. des Cheval Hospit. &c. A Paris, A. D. 1726, 8vo, tom. i, livre 1. 2

the feet of the pope. Peter the hermit was small of stature, and his person, which was naturally thin, had become more meagre by anxiety and fasting. By contemplation, his penetrating eye had acquired a little languor; his feet were bare, and his head without a covering; his body was clothed with a coarse garment; and he wore a massy crucifix. He entered a palace with as little ceremony as a cottage; for the heavenly cause rendered him bold.

He was naturally ready of utterance, and the rapturous emotions of his mind made him more than eloquent. The hand of liberality was opened to bless him; but he gave in charity what he received in alms. His whole figure was striking; his language impressive; and multitudes flocked to behold and listen. His sighs produced in others the sentiments which he felt; and his tears of bitterness commanded the sympathetic stream of sorrow. The pope summoned councils to raise a combination for

delivering the Holy land ; and the general cry was death or victory.^b

The progress of the Turks was alarming to the court of Constantinople ; and their threatening attitude, on the Asiatic side of the Bosphorus, made the Grecians forget the inroads of the Normans, and wish for the aid of the western nations. The emperor of Constantinople was stirred up to join the vast preparations which the pope had excited, and to aid the other christian nations in subduing the Turks. A great crusade was now in the act of forming ; and, though the sovereigns of Europe did not join in person, yet many royal names and noble champions were inscribed in the sacred roll.

At the council of Clermont, A. D. 1096, the 15th of August ensuing was fixed as the day of departing for Jerusalem. In the vast crowds assembled,

^b Will. Tyrensis, lib. i, c. 11 ; and Albert. Aquensis, lib. i, c. 2, &c.

some were stimulated by evident zeal, and others by licentious views. A considerable number refused to wait the specified time, and, under the guidance of Peter the hermit, they directed their course toward Judea. Though their conduct had been ever so regular, yet, numerous and voracious like the locusts, they must have eaten and destroyed every thing on their way. But the alarm was heightened by their disorderly conduct ; and, in the countries through which they passed, the hand of violence was lifted up against them.

The emperor of Constantinople had solicited their aid, and therefore was bound to treat them as friends ; but they violated the laws of hospitality, and he prudently persuaded them to cross the Bosphorus. On the Asiatic shore they became impatient for plunder, and when the whole multitude were mutinous, Peter the hermit quitted the camp, and returned to Constantinople. Overawed by no superior power ; under the

authority of no regular command ; and ill provided with things necessary for them, they rushed, in despair, toward the Turkish troops ; and, in the hour of battle, suffered by imprudence and ill-directed courage. On the plains of Nice, multitudes of christian adventurers suffered death, without a single advantage gained.

At the time appointed, the princes and more regular troops of the crusade began their march, and directed their route with all the prudence which wisdom or experience could devise ; yet still it was a march of difficulty and danger. They divided themselves into parties, and took different roads, for the purpose of more easily procuring food and accommodation. Constantinople was the point at which they were all to meet ; but the arrival of so many troops disquieted the emperor Alexius.

He was not ignorant of the restless temper, and successful arms of the northern tribes ; and he was not without fear,

that the charms of his capital might induce them to forget the deliverance of Jerusalem, and incline them to seek an abode in the eastern empire. Boheimond, the son of Robert Guiscard, who had formerly invaded the dominions of Alexius, was not alone in proposing the very measure which the emperor apprehended ; but he did not meet with general support ; and Alexius artfully prevailed upon them also to pass the Bosphorus.

Notwithstanding the losses which had been sustained, this division of the forces, when mustered in Bithynia, amounted to 700,000 men. The principality of Rum,^a extending from the Hellespont

^a According to some of the Oriental writers, the name Roum, or Rûm, which means Roman, is applied to all those countries which had been held in succession by the Roman and Greek emperors ; and, by the Turkish geographers, Europe in general is denominated Rûm ; but it seems to have been more properly confined to that principality afterwards formed by Soliman the Turk, which reached from the Bosphorus to the confines of Syria. D'Herbelot, titre Roum ; et Cantimir, title Mohammed I ; M. Deguignes, tom ii, livre 11.

to the borders of Syria, then belonged to a prince of the Seljucides, and the celebrated Nice was its capital. There the army of the crusade opened a regular siege; the city was taken; but, by the protection of Alexius, the victory was conducted with discretion. Among the successes which attended the arms of the crusade, Baldwin de Bourg accepted an invitation to assist the governor of Edessa; and there, upon the ruins of his employer, he founded a principality, which lasted more than fifty years.^b

The army of the crusades pushed onward into the interior of the country, and left the Greek emperor in possession of Nice. While the Turks were called from the sea-coast, to follow the standard of their leader, Alexius enlarged his boundaries on the Asiatic side of the Bosphorus, that he might keep his east-

^b Albert. Aquens. lib. i; Will. Tyr. lib. i, et alios script. in gest. Dei per Francos.

ern enemies at a distance from Constantinople. He neglected his engagements in the crusade, to provide for the peace and safety of his own empire. Upon the 21st of October 1097, the champions of the Holy land invested Antioch. Often had it been taken ; many revolutions had it undergone ; and much of its ancient glory had it lost ; yet still, by its walls and fortifications, Antioch was a place of strength. But, after a powerful resistance, the city was taken, and Bohemond was left to govern it. As if the armies of the crusade had forgotten their purpose in leaving Europe, they lingered, and rioted long among the spoils of Syria. After various resolutions and changes of sentiment, they began their march toward Jerusalem, on the 13th of May, A. D. 1099 ; arrived within sight of the city on the 7th of the following month ; and, after a siege of about forty days, Godfrey de Bouillon stood victorious upon its walls.

About 460 years had elapsed since the Saracens wrested Jerusalem from the christians ; it was more than twenty years since the Turks had taken it from the Arabians ; and the Fatimite caliphs of Egypt had of late regained it from the Turks. When the crusaders entered the city, they spread general devastation throughout ; and the scenes of carnage were dreadful. Revenge, for what christians had suffered, assumed exterminating forms ; and the professed disciples of him who broke not the bruised reed, committed every violence, and were deaf to the voice of mercy. Weary with slaughter, they turned to the tomb of Jesus ; fell prostrate before the sacred place ; and the hands which were yet polluted with gore they lifted in adoration towards heaven. But the emotions which they thus felt, and the prayers which they thus presented, could not be adorned with humility, benevolence, and true devotion. They must have been

blended with the unhallowed affections of a ferocious spirit.^c

Godfrey de Bouillon was unanimously elected to preside over the city; and he might have been dignified with the highest titles of honour, but he refused to wear a crown of royalty where his master, Jesus, had been insulted with one of thorns. While the christians were carrying on the siege of Antioch, the caliph of Egypt attempted to divert their hostile views from Jerusalem, by promising them protection and free access to the holy sepulchre. It was the cruelties which the Turks exercised toward the christians which sounded the alarm through Europe, and made numbers flock to the standard of the cross.

But as these ferocious enemies were again driven from Jerusalem, by the Fatimites, the Mohammedans of Egypt

^c Al Makin, p. 293; et Abulpharaj. p. 243; et Will. Tyrensis, lib. viii, passim.

encouraged a hope that their assurances of friendship would satisfy the christians, and prevent them from attacking the city of Jerusalem. As the Fatimites were struggling against the Turks in Syria, they discovered unequivocal satisfaction, that their enemies, the Seljuces, were checked in their progress, and had met with defeats by the christian armies. They even hoped to have the European adventurers ranked among the number of their allies ; but the spirit of chivalry was in its highest tone, and no infidel, whether Saracen or Turk, must possess the Holy land. As soon as those sentiments were known at Grand Cairo, an army marched from Egypt to assist in defending Jerusalem ; but before it arrived, the christians had taken the city ; and, having made the necessary arrangements for its order and defence, the governor, Godfrey de Bouillon, went out with his soldiers, met the Egyptian forces at Ashkelon, and though

they were great in number, yet the christians were victorious.^d

The persecutions and afflictions which the christians had suffered from the Arabians, as well as the Turks, had not taught them the exercise of moderation and forbearance. A Latin patriarch was chosen at Jerusalem, and the Greek and Jacobite christians differing from him in sentiment were not allowed to visit the sepulchre of Jesus. But though religious zeal contracted the bounds of brotherly love, yet compassion to the afflicted adorned the character of Godfrey de Bouillon. The sick and wounded were peculiarly objects of his care; and finding that one of those houses of charity and beneficence, which had formerly been erected by permission of the Mohammedans, was dedicated to S^t. John the almoner, whose charities had been conspicuous in the Syrian and

^d Will. Tyr. lib. iv, c. 24; et lib. ix, c. 10, &c.; et Renaudot. Hist. Pat. Alex. p. 478.

other churches, he established a religious order for the exercise of compassion, and he denominated the members of that institution the Hospitallers of S^t. John. Many persons of note zealously joined this order, though numbers returned home to enjoy, among their friends, the honours of the crusade.^b Gerard, who had been illustrious for his acts of mercy to the afflicted pilgrims, was chosen superior of the order; and so popular was the institution, that, in a short time, there was not a kingdom of Europe where lands and money were not devoted to the service of the hospitallers.^b

A. D. 1101.—About two years after the taking of Jerusalem by the army of the crusaders, Mostali Billah, the caliph of Egypt, died; and his son, Abu Ali Mansur, was called to the throne, by the name of Amer Bihcamillah. Afdal,

^b Jacob. de Vitriaco, c. 64; M. Vertot, tom. i, liv. 1; et Renaudot. Hist. Pat. p. 479.

who had been vizer in the late reign, was continued in office, to take the charge of public affairs ; for Amer Bihcamillah was but five years of age when he was declared caliph. His uncle Berar attempted to seize the reins of government, and dethrone the young caliph. For this purpose he fled to Alexandria, which was still a place of strength, though neglected by the court, and falling into decay. It had several times of late been the rallying point of the disaffected and rebellious ; but as they had uniformly been suppressed, so Berar was taken and disappointed in his views.

A. D. 1100.—Before the death of the late Egyptian caliph, Godfrey, the governor of Jerusalem, under the pressure of anxiety and disease, sunk into the grave ; and Baldwin, the prince of Edessa, succeeded to the government of Jerusalem. The reign of the new king lasted about eighteen years, and he considerably increased the European settlements in Syria. The caliph Amer Bih-

camillah and he were obstinate rivals in attempting to extend the boundaries of their respective governments. But Baldwin was carried off by a dysentery, which, as some affirm, was occasioned by swimming across the river Nile in an unfavourable season, when he was conducting an army in Egypt; and his cousin, Baldwin II, succeeded to the crown of Jerusalem.^c

A. D. 1123.—In the meantime, Amer, the caliph of Egypt, made some successful efforts in the interior of Syria, and then laid siege to Joppa, or Jaffa, both by sea and land. This town was in possession of the christians; but Baldwin, king of Jerusalem, was then a prisoner of war among the Turks; and the captivity of this prince paralyzed the exertions of the whole kingdom. But, even in this situation of dismay, the Fatimites were not successful in their attempts. Eustace Garnier, lord of Sidon and Cæsaria, had also been appointed

^c Abulpharaj, p. 248.

constable of Palestine; and, though then bending under the weight of years, he collected a body of troops, and repulsed the Egyptians. When the army fled, the ships set sail, and directed their course for the port of Alexandria; but they were met and vanquished by Henry, doge of Venice; and, soon after this delivery of Jaffa, the king of Jerusalem was freed from bondage.*

Several gentlemen of consequence in France visited the Holy land; and, being moved by the dangers to which the pilgrims were still exposed on their journey to Jerusalem, were desirous of forming a military order for protecting the pious travellers. By the approbation of Pope Honorius II, the order was established; and, having lodged at first near the place where the temple of Jerusalem stood, the knights were distinguished by the name of Templars.

* Abulpharaj, p. 250; Will. Tyr. lib. 12, 13; et Vertot, tom. i, livre 1.

These knights soon became more popular, in that age of chivalry, than those of S^c. John, because the duty of the former was purely of a military nature; whereas the knights of S^c. John, though likewise champions in the field of battle, were also bound, by the rules of their order, to attend the hospitals, and perform the humble but benevolent office of visiting the sick, and administering to their comfort.^a

A.D. 1130.—Abulmaimum, the grandson of a former caliph, Mostansur Billah, directed his eye toward the throne of Egypt, which had become vacant by the murder of his cousin Bihcamillah. But as the widow of the late caliph was left with child by her husband, the people suspended the acknowledging of a new sovereign, till it should appear whether or not an heir would be born in the house of Amer Bihcamillah. The lady in due time was delivered; but the

^a Will. Tyr. lib. xii, c. 7.

child was a daughter; and Maimun was received upon the throne by the surname of Hafedah Ledinillah.

Abu Ahmed, who was then vizer of Egypt, aspired also to the throne; and the caliph experienced some resistance from him in the first efforts of his sovereign authority. But Abu Ahmed was degraded from his office, and, amid some changes and difficulties, Barham, a man of knowledge and worth, was raised to the dignity of vizer. The enmity which had long been discovered toward the christians, was considerably exasperated by the progress of the crusades, and the jarring interests which subsisted between the European adventurers and the caliphs of Egypt. Either because Barham had an affection for the christians, or because he was more moderate and humane than some of his late predecessors, he was accused of being a traitor to the state; and the caliph found it necessary to remove him from office, and appoint Redwan in his stead.

Barham retired from court, and, with his adherents, hastened to Upper Egypt, where his brother was intrusted with the government of a province; but, fearful of his power and designs, his enemies were swifter in their course than he, and, upon arriving at the end of his journey, he found that his brother had unexpectedly been put to death. Depressed in mind, and disappointed of an asylum in the house of a friend, he entered a monastery, and abandoned the world. The christians had long been suffering injuries in Egypt; and, as Barham was discarded for lifting up the shield of their defence, the measure of their sorrows was now full. Redwan displaced them from every station of honour or trust; destroyed that part of Grand Cairo where they chiefly resided; threw down their churches; and involved the whole body in distress.

So much power had the vizer of Egypt now acquired, that as formerly those of Bagdad, so now the vizer at

Cairo, was saluted with the title of king. His tyranny produced disgust, his power excited envy, and these, in combination with his new title, exposed him to danger. Seeing a storm gathering, he retired into Syria to avoid the meditated blow; and to acquire political as well as military strength.

The Egyptian caliphs had a numerous body of soldiers in Ashkelon, which was on the borders of the Holy land, and the key between that country and Egypt.

Redwan, the discarded vizer of Egypt, expected that his influence would be sufficient to secure the Egyptian soldiers in Syria, and, in the weak state of government at Jerusalem, to make successful exertions in Palestine; but having been baffled in his attempts where he expected so much success, he returned to Egypt. He entered the country with a considerable number of troops, but, after some ineffectual attempts to obtain power, he was obliged to cast himself on

the mercy of the caliph ; and Hafedah treated him with dignified generosity.

It has been asserted, that, during the revolt of Redwan, Barham was recalled to court, where he lived in the sunshine of favour ; but, knowing the danger of power in an unsettled government, he refused to accept an ostensible situation, though in private he supported the caliph by his friendship and advice. From this time forward Hafedah appointed no vizer, but directed the affairs of state by his own immediate command. Clemency and justice marked his conduct ; peace and harmony reigned within his borders. He restored to the Jacobite christians those privileges which repeated violences had taken away, and enabled them to rebuild those churches which their enemies had destroyed.^f

The Albuna, or chief ecclesiastic, of Ethiopia, had uniformly been ordained at Alexandria ; and was connected with

^f Abulpharaj. p. 250 ; et Renaudot. p. 503.

the patriarch of that city. The Albuna was positively enjoined not to have more than seven bishops in Abyssinia ; for if they amounted to a certain number, they might ordain a metropolitan, or even a patriarch, and become independent of the church of Egypt. The king of Ethiopia commanded Michael, the Abyssinian Albuna, to ordain an additional number of bishops ; but that ecclesiastic, faithful to his mother church, and stedfast in the vows which he had made, firmly declared to the sovereign, that he was not at liberty to comply with the injunction, unless permission were obtained from the patriarch of Alexandria. A deputation therefore arrived from Ethiopia to obtain the consent both of the caliph of Egypt, and the patriarch of Alexandria. Hafedah manifested a willingness to grant the request ; but it was shewn by Gabriel the patriarch, that Ethiopia would soon become hostile to Egypt, if no religious bond of connection subsisted be-

tween them. The reason assigned by the patriarch was satisfactory to Hafe-dah; and the church of Ethiopia continued to be dependent on the church of E ypt.

When Redwan submitted to the caliph, he was not exposed to the punishment which treason deserved; but, to prevent renewed attempts from his restless ambition, he was cast into confinement. While every thing was quiet throughout the realm, and the strictness of suspicion removed, Redwan was either restored to liberty, or escaped secretly from confinement, and appeared again with a formidable body of rebels. But, owing to the insubordination of an intractable and profligate multitude, commotions frequently occurred in Egypt; and, in a tumult among his followers, Redwan was put to death, and the caliph was delivered from a restless enemy.^b

^b Renaudot. Hist. Pat. p. 510, &c.

A. D. 1149.—Hafedah Ledinillah having finished a reign of twenty years, died at the age of eighty; and was succeeded by his son Ishmael, under the name of Dhaher Billah. He raised to the office of vizer Nojmoddin, who had been his father's favourite; but Ali Ben Selar, the governor of Alexandria, was anxious to obtain that station; and, under the influence of disappointment, he marched to Grand Cairo, and commanded the young king to depose the vizer. Dhaher was but in the eighteenth year of his age, and was induced, through fear, to gratify the ambition of Ali; and Nojmoddin, in attempting to resent the injury which he had sustained, fell a sacrifice to the power and designs of his rival. The new vizer had forced himself into office contrary to the inclination of the caliph; and Naser, who was a favourite of the young prince, thrust down Ali from his usurped dignity, and placed his own father Abbas on that important station.

But the caliph was unfortunate on every side, for the new vizer plotted the destruction, and accomplished the death of the prince himself. The caliph was invited to the vizer's house; but, while lost in the pleasures of a banquet, and indulging in the joys of society, he and his attending courtiers were put to death. The vizer Abbas had obtained his office by the influence which his son Naser had with the caliph; and Abbas attempted to vindicate his ingratitude to the young prince, by alleging, that he had made unnatural proposals to his son, and that the character of Naser had been injured by the intimacy which subsisted between him and Dhaher. But it is more probable, that the object he had in view was to acquire additional power, by shaking off the restraints of an active prince, and enjoying the untroubled authority of an infant reign. In confirmation of this idea, the successor was but a child; and if the vizer's view had not been aggrandisement, he

would have withdrawn from court, and resigned his office. It was his duty to have separated his son from the influence of the caliph, and left Dhaher to the effects of his own conduct, rather than to have stained his hands in guilt, and brought infamy upon his own head.

An embassy had lately been sent to Europe to solicit another crusade; for all Syria was agitated by the power of the Saracens and Turks. At the court of the Seljucides, the principal officers and generals rose to so much power, that they were denominated Atabecs, or governors of the prince. The family of Acsancar became powerful at Mossul and Aleppo, and were at this time terrible by their influence and success. The famous S^t. Bernard, who, in the cell of a recluse, was listened to as a prophet, recommended a numerous and well-appointed crusade. By this opinion he gratified Pope Eugenius III and the general spirit of the christians

in Europe. Louis VII of France, and Conrad III of Germany, received the blessing of Bernard; and, having drawn together a vast multitude of attendants, marched toward Jerusalem. Eleanora, the queen of France, followed her lord; and many females joined the train.

A variety of discouragements befel them by the way; and the deceitful conduct of Manuel Comnenus, the emperor of Constantinople, threw Conrad into distress, and exposed his army to many evils. After various toils and disasters, Louis and Conrad met at Jerusalem, and embraced with the mingled tears of joy and sorrow. They attempted the siege of Damascus, but their remaining troops were unfit for action; treachery appeared in the army; and the royal commanders returned to Europe with shame and disappointment.

A. D. 1153.—These transactions emboldened the enemies of Europe, and the condition of Syria was every day

more precarious, and fraught with danger. Jerusalem was assailed by the Saracens ; but the invaders were driven back, and Baldwin the king opened an offensive war against the Mohammedans, and laid siege to Ashkelon. That ancient city was of considerable extent, and strongly defended by walls and bulwarks. It had outworks to prevent, or retard a near approach ; and the whole was of a semicircular form, having the sea-shore for its diameter. Baldwin, though young, conducted the siege with much address ; and the town was defended with courage and skill. When, therefore, the christians gained a foot of ground, they gained it through peril and blood ; and frequently it happened, that what they gained to-day they lost before the appearing of to-morrow's sun.

Five months had the hostile parties striven in equal conflict, when a numerous fleet from Egypt arrived, with arms and provisions. The christians, who

had only a few gallies, durst not try the issue with so powerful a force, but retired quickly, to avoid danger and destruction. Thus the besieged were animated in their defence, and those who invested the town were ready to despond. To abandon the siege, and return to Jerusalem, were the prevailing sentiments of the christian army ; but the grand master of the knights of S^t. John spurned at the proposal, and immediately the knights clashed their armour in defiance.

In this honourable resolution they were supported by the patriarch of Jerusalem ; and the army were inspired with a spirit of perseverance. Every day the attack and the defence became more bloody ; quarter was neither asked nor given. The whole warlike engines of the siege were employed, and multitudes on both sides were swept into destruction. Long did the fierceness of the siege continue, till, upon the 12th of

August 1154,^o a treaty was executed, which left the christians in possession of Ashkelon. The fame of this conquest raised the honour of the knights; and many privileges were conferred upon the religious orders who fought in defence of the Holy land.^p

A. D. 1154.—It has already been observed, that the heir to the caliphate of Egypt was but a child; and we find that Abbas the vizer brought him from the women's apartments in the seraglio, and placed him on the throne. To his name, Abulcasem, was added Fayez Benasrillah; but the young caliph, only five years old, was unfit to manage the important concerns of the kingdom; and therefore the ambitious vizer was gratified with the uncontrouled direction of public affairs.

^o Some say A. D. 1153.

^p Abulpharaj. p. 257; Will. Tyr. lib. xvii, c. 26, &c.; M. Vertot. tom. i, livre i; et M. D'Herbelot, titre Hafedah Ledinillah.

His aspiring views made him reign with presumption, and his conscious guilt rendered him tyrannical. Soon did he become odious to the people; and the odium was increased by the prevailing opinion, that he had murdered the preceding caliph. Talay Ben Zaric, the commander in chief of the armies, was loudly called upon to vindicate the cause of innocent blood. The ladies of the court cried for vengeance; and, tearing off their hair, they sent it to the general as a memorial of sorrow, and a stimulus to inquiry and punishment.

It was a hazardous experiment to draw the sword against the vizer, before whom every authority of the state bowed; but Talay felt the service which was due to his country; and apprehensive, or perhaps aware of the vizer's guilt, he collected his troops, and marched toward the palace. The occasion was momentous: Abbas saw his danger, and fled into Syria; but was there overtaken by the hand of ven-

geance, and suffered death. His son Naser was brought back to Grand Cairo, and died in the midst of torments.

It is presumed that Talay's conduct was not altogether free from selfish views ; for, upon the death of Abbas, he was constituted vizer, and assumed high authority in the state. The power of the Fatimite caliphs was still more and more giving way to that of their vizers; and the ambition of Talay, during a weak reign, grasped, and exercised, almost the whole prerogatives of the state.^b

A. D. 1160.—After a reign of little more than six years, the throne became vacant by the death of Fayez, and Abdallah, the grandson of Hafedah, was invited to the government, by the name of Aded Ledinillah. One of the first events which happened in this reign, was the death of the vizer Talay Ben Zaric. He

^b Abulphrajaius, p. 257, &c.

was assassinated by some hired ruffians; and having suspected the caliph of forming the plot, he upbraided him with the deed. Conscious of his own integrity, Aded Ledinillah maintained his innocence; and, finding that his aunt had been accessory to the murder, he committed her to the disposal of the dying vizer, and she was instantly beheaded.

Death was undoubtedly the portion which she deserved; but we are somewhat moved at finding revenge in the breast of a dying man. Example might be useful to the living, and necessary for the order of society; but mercy and forgiveness would have been proper and amiable in the departing vizer, who, with all his sins upon his own head, was taking the last step, which was to separate him from the world, and place him before his judge. Having obtained, from the timid and over-awed caliph, the succession of the vizerate for his son, Ta-

lay surrendered his life into the hands of him who gave it.

Of all the governors who then presided over the different provinces of Egypt, Shower was recommended, by the late vizer to his son, as the most prudent and worthy of confidence; but, in the unsettled condition of the kingdom, Shower was treated with ingratitude, and, feeling indignant, he burst out into rebellion. The young vizer fled from his approach, and Shower seized upon the reins of government. The caliph was little regarded, for, at this period of the Fatimite dynasty, the vizers of Egypt had not the name, but they possessed the absolute authority of the Emir al Omra at the court of Bagdad. The appellation of vizer, or prime minister, was not sufficiently dignified for the extent of their acquired powers; and therefore the vizers of Egypt now assumed the name of sultan, which signifies lord, signior, or king.

Scarcely had Shower laid himself

down on the couch of state, when the din of arms roused him to action. Dargham, an officer of high rank in the army, saw the disturbed situation of affairs; and was moved by ambition to aim at power, amid the changes of the state. Shower, who was lately but the governor of a province, had now his seat next to the caliph himself; and, excepting the name, was in reality the sovereign of the country; and why might not Dargham overthrow that usurper?

Thus the aspiring and powerful general reasoned; and the vizer, or sultan, as he was now called, being unprepared for an attack, Dargham surrounded him unawares in the palace. By good fortune, and friendly aid, Shower escaped, and took refuge at Damascus, which was now in the possession of Nureddin,^c an Atabec prince; and there that emir kept his court. Various efforts were made to procure his aid in favour of the fugitive sultan; but he cautiously

^c Nur-a'-lin.

viewed the field of hazard, and counted the chances of triumph or defeat.

A. D. 1164.—Dargham, while in pursuit of Shower, met the army of Amaury, the king of Jerusalem, who had succeeded Baldwin III. The armies approached each other with hostile designs; for the Egyptians were enraged at the losses which they had suffered by the christians; and the leaders of the crusade waited for an opportunity of conquering Egypt, as a necessary step for the peace and security of the Holy land. The troops of Jerusalem were chiefly composed of the templars and the knights of S^t. John. They were led on with spirit, and displayed their native bravery. The Egyptians, in the haunts of effeminacy, had lost the ardour of martial prowess; but if they had been more hardy and fearless than they were, yet, moving in their loose robes, and lightly armed, they could not have withstood, in open battle, the intrepid champions of Europe, who were clothed complete-

ly in steel. In the speed of conquest, the army of the crusade hastened to Egypt, where they spread terror and destruction. The fear of Egypt becoming a province of the christians overcame the scruples of Nureddin; and he granted effectual assistance to the unfortunate Shawer.^d

Nureddin appointed a numerous army for Egypt, who were apparently under the command of Shawer, but really at the disposal of the Syrian general Asadoddin Shiraguah, or Shiracuah.^e Thus prepared they boldly entered Egypt; met the enemy; and Dargham fell. Shawer was restored to his former powers; but in the day of prosperity he forgot his benefactor, and neglected to pay Nureddin the stipulated rewards. Nureddin was secretly pleased with the treachery of Shawer, because it afforded a

^d Abulpharaj. p. 262; Renaudot. Hist. Pat. Alex. p. 523; et Vertot, tom. i, livre 2.

^e Or, as European writers call him, Syracon.

pretence for subduing Egypt, and adding it to his own possessions. Quickly, therefore, he sent Shiracuah with increased forces, commanded him to chastise the perfidy of the Egyptian sultan, and subdue the country for the emir of Damascus.

Seeing the danger to which he was exposed, Shower offered terms of accommodation to the king of Jerusalem, who was still in Egypt, and by large sums secured him as an ally. We cannot develop, with certainty, the reason of Amaury's conduct, for as Egypt was an object of his peculiar desire, it would appear that he ought to have retained what he possessed, and, in this time of Shower's perturbation, made a grand effort to overthrow him. But perhaps the circumstances of Egypt were such, at that juncture of time, as to preclude the hopes of subduing it. There might also be but a doubtful prospect of being able to conduct his army in safety to Palestine, while the Syrian border of

Egypt was deluged by the troops of Damascus.

It might seem better, in the meantime, to join his army with the troops of Shawer ; to receive a sum of money to answer some of his most pressing demands ; and to wait a more favourable opportunity for attempting the subjection of Egypt. His soldiers in the army of Shawer would be inured to the climate, and if the forces of Nureddin should be repelled, the bold knights of S^t. John and the temple, who had sworn to defend the christian cause, would be ready, when occasion offered, to overthrow the feeble government of the Fatimites, and erect the standard of the cross upon the walls of Grand Cairo. In the meantime, Nureddin was not unemployed in Syria ; and, by his threatening movements, he alarmed the christians for the safety of Jerusalem. Under these apprehensions they were easily persuaded to abandon the Egyptian sultan ; and, permitting Shiracuah to quit

Pelusium, where he had been closely shut up, they allowed him to return in peace to Damascus.^b

Enraged at the defeat which he had sustained at Pelusium, and determined to acquire the sovereignty of Egypt, Nurreddin set Shiracuah at the head of a still more powerful army; possessed himself of Giza; and became master of Alexandria. In this expedition Shiracuah was accompanied by his nephew Saladin,^c who was left to defend Alexandria, while his uncle extended his conquests into Upper Egypt.

The arms of Shower and his associates pressed so hard on Alexandria, that Saladin was in danger, and Shiracuah hastened back to his relief, but was prevailed upon, by negociation, to quit the enterprise, and return to Syria with his nephew and the whole troops. The

^b Abu'pharaj. p. 262, 263; et Renaudot. Hist. Pat. p. 523, 524.

^c Salah-al-din.

reason of this unexpected, and, as it would appear, unjustifiable proceeding, was probably the sickly and diminished state of his troops ; but ostensibly it was the submission of Shower, and the sums of money paid for deliverance.*

A. D. 1167.—Still Amaury looked with ambition towards Egypt ; but to produce a reasonable prospect of success, the country must be assailed at once both by sea and land. Ships, therefore, must be procured from a maritime ally ; and the military knights of the cross had scruples to fight on any other account but in defence of their religion and the Holy land. The enmity of the Mohammedans, however, and the repeated treachery of their conduct, were viewed as sufficient reasons for treating them like enemies. Upon this determination, a powerful army passed the desert, and laid siege to Pelusium. Having easily possessed themselves of that

* Renaudot. Hist. Pat. Alex. p. 524.

city, they marched to Grand Cairo, and made the caliph, as well as the sultan, tremble on the throne.

Amaury was at the head of his troops ; and while he was resting upon his arms, waiting for a final adjustment between him and the sultan, behold the armies of Nureddin covered the land, and advanced in terrible array. Amaury was alarmed for his own safety and that of his troops ; but Shiracuah, the Syrian general, rather avoided than sought an engagement. His object, at the moment, was not to subdue the king of Jerusalem, at the hazard of weakening his forces ; but it was to push forward in the conquest of Egypt, and the total overthrow of the Fatimite power. The troops of the crusade were permitted to escape, and Amaury, having left Egypt, which had lately trembled at his presence, returned to Jerusalem with grief and self-condemnation.^d

^d Will. Tyr. lib. xix, passim.

A. D. 1169.—We have already seen the abject state in which the caliph of Egypt was placed ; for, when a vizer or sultan was appointed, the whole temporal power was lodged with him ; and Aded Ledinillah might rather be considered as a prisoner than the sovereign of the state. When Shiracuah arrived at Cairo, the caliph received him as a friend, and rejoiced to be delivered from the dominion of Shower. The sultan employed all his power, and all his address, to resist the influence and arms of Shiracuah ; but the fatal order was given, and, by the mandate of the caliph, aided by the power of the Syrian emperor, Shower was beheaded.

Shiracuah was invested with a royal robe, and constituted vizer, with all its dignities and emoluments. In this state of the city, the people rose in an uproar, because a stranger was placed in the seat of authority ; but large benefactions appeased them, and the costly palace of the late sultan was given up to

plunder. The honours of Shiracuah, however, were of short duration, for, in a few weeks, he yielded to the stroke of death, and Saladin, his nephew, rose to the supreme command.^g

We cannot contemplate the elevation of Saladin without a high degree of wonder and astonishment; for he was the youngest of all the grandees who looked up for the office of sultan. It is impossible to ascertain whether he obtained his appointment through the weakness of Aded, the fame of his own military exploits, or by a hope which the caliph might entertain, that, under the management of a young and unexperienced prince, he might be able to shake off the Turkish yoke, and assert the dignity of his station. Whatever designs Saladin might cherish of becoming at length independent of the lord of Damascus, yet he acted for a

^g Abulpharaj. p. 263; D'Herbelot, titre Schirgoueh; et Renaudot. Hist. Pat. Alex. p. 532, 533.

while with discretion toward Nureddin, and shewed every mark of deference and respect. He received his orders with cheerfulness, and executed his commands with ready submission.

The powerful Nureddin was the natural enemy of the European adventurers who had made settlements in Palestine, and not only sought for temporal dominion, but had left their country with the avowed purpose of supporting the faith of the gospel, in opposition to the religion of Mohammed. If the christians were objects of jealousy to Nureddin, every step of aggrandizement which he took was a ground of suspicion to the leaders of the crusade. When, therefore, he had over-run Egypt, and had all its resources at his command, they were under the most fearful apprehensions of his power and vengeance. Their direct and obvious course was to pass into Egypt, and overthrow, if possible, that establishment which the emir of Damascus had acquired among the

branches of the Nile. But time and disasters had thinned the ranks of the christian warriors, and the source of their supply, which was in a distant land, had almost become dry. Different embassies had been sent into the west; but, on various accounts, the applications for succour were unsuccessful.

In the meantime, the emperor of Constantinople, in compliance with the wish of Amaury, had sent to his assistance a fleet of more than 200 vessels. These ships anchored in the harbour of Acca, where it was concerted among the commanders, both by sea and land, in what manner Egypt was to be assailed. The fleet of Constantinople sailed along the coast, and met the troops of Amaury near the eastern branch of the Nile.

Assisted by the ships, the soldiers crossed the river; and the united forces of Greece and Palestine approached the walls of Damietta. The christians expected to have taken the town by sur-

prise ; but the garrison was well provided with every thing necessary to defend it. While the army and fleet of the crusades were suffering a variety of hardships in the siege of Damietta, Nureddin was attacking their possessions in Syria ; and they found it expedient to return into the east, and resist his encroachments.

Nureddin was anxious to diminish the settlements of the crusades in Syria ; and Saladin was desirous of obtaining the key of Egypt toward the borders of Arabia and Palestine. With this view the sultan of Egypt laid siege to Askelon, and made various inroads into the adjoining territories ; yet he was obliged to return home without accomplishing any useful purpose. Nureddin, the prince of Damascus, finding that Saladin was possessed of every strong hold in Egypt, and also master of the palace, formed a steady resolution of tearing from the caliph the last emblem of power and respect.

For this purpose he commanded the name of Aded Ledinillah to be omitted in the public prayers of the mosque, and that of Mostadi, the caliph of Bagdad, to be pronounced in its stead. This attempt was viewed by Saladin as too bold an experiment, because the caliph had still many friends in the realm; and, moreover, the Egyptians being mostly Shütes, would naturally be enraged at having their mosques polluted by the name of a Sonnite caliph. But the resolution of Nureddin was immoveable, and, having issued a positive command, his will was obeyed.

In a solemn council of the grandees, the perilous project was canvassed, and, while the attempt was viewed by many with uneasy forebodings, a Persian emir boldly offered to hazard the experiment. The name of Mostadi was pronounced in the public prayers; the multitudes were amazed; but their vigour and patriotism were so much enfeebled, that scarcely a murmur was heard. Aded

was at that time stretched on a bed of affliction ; for the accumulated evils of life had borne him down. The last stroke of degradation inflicted by Nureddin was not made known to the expiring caliph ; and, in a few days, he was removed from the trials and sorrows of life. In him the dynasty of the Fatimites was terminated, after having existed about 263 years. At the death of Aded Ledinillah, the green standard, belonging to the descendants of Mohammed, was wrapped up, never to be again unfurled in Egypt, as the white had departed with the Ommiades, and as the black did with the house of Abbas.^a

A. D. 1171.—To amuse the mind of the caliphs of Egypt, when they were shut out from the active scenes of life, the palace was splendidly adorned and prepared for scenes of festivity and dissipation. It was in truth a prison, but

^a Abulpharaj. p. 266 ; et D'Herbelot, titres Nouredin et Salaheddin.

it was a prison of state. Within the gloomy doors, there were gems and precious stones, ensigns of royalty, and sofas of state: there, too, were an extensive library, fountains of water, and artificial cascades. Every species of luxury which could enervate the mind was prepared for the caliph; and thus he was dissolved in indolence, while his vizer usurped the supreme command, and while the benumbing powers of effeminate pursuits were preparing the state for changes and dissolution.

Saladin had now the reins of Egypt completely in his own hand, though, in appearance, he was directed by the command of Nureddin. Each of these princes was jealous of the other's power, and each of them aimed at his rival's destruction. But in the midst of those ambitious designs, Nureddin breathed his last, and removed the fears of Saladin. He was an elegant and engaging prince; majestic in his figure; severe, but just in his conduct; and among the

cries of oppression, which followed his death, the name of Nureddin was uttered with emotions of reverence and regret.^b

^b Abulfed. vol. iii, p. 621, &c.

BOOK VIII.

CHAP. I.

The Ayubite dynasty. . . . Saladin. . . Disputes about the crown of Jerusalem. . . . Lusignan defeated at Tiberias. . . . Desperate defence of Jerusalem. . . . St. John D'Acre taken from Saladin by the armies of the crusade. . . . The termination of the Ayubite dynasty.

A. D. 1174. A. H. 570. **S**ALADIN was now firmly seated upon the throne of Egypt; the disputed claims to the succession of Nureddin's empire opened a field of exertion for the active and ambitious mind of the Egyptian sultan. Saladin had his extraction from one of the most illustrious tribes of the Curdes, who came from a branch of Mount

Taurus, and, spreading themselves along the banks of the Tigris and Euphrates, gave to that country the name of Curdestan. Two brothers, Assadeddin Shiracuah, and Nogemoddin Ayub,^a having left their friends and country, went upon an adventure into Irac, and rose to eminence at Mossul, in the service of Zenghi.

Upon the death of their master, a difference existed between his sons about the division of his possessions ; and the two Curdish brothers attached themselves to the interests of Nureddin, who fixed his residence at Aleppo. Shiracuah, the elder of the brothers, was sent, as we have found, by Nureddin with an army into Egypt, attended by his nephew Saladin, who has now risen to the sovereign and uncontrouled command of that country. When elevated to the throne, he did not aspire to any other name but sultan ; for, not being deem-

^a Or Job.

ed the successor of Mohammed, he was not pontiff of the Moslem religion, and therefore not entitled to the name of caliph.^b

The counts of Sicily, in the progress of their ambition, had been honoured with the title of king; and, about this time, we find William II, of that island, lying in siege before Alexandria. He appears to have engaged in the interest of the crusades; but the arms of Saladin obliged him to leave Alexandria, and return to Sicily with disappointment and disgrace. In the following year, Saladin traversed Syria with much success, took Damascus, constituted his brother Turan governor of the city, and returned with triumph into Egypt. His active spirit was now employed in beautifying Grand Cairo, promoting literature, and carrying forward works of beneficence.

^b Abulpharaj. p. 267; D'Herbelot, titre Noureddin et Ayub.

A. D. 1177.—Saladin was drawn, at this time, from his domestic pursuits, by the progress of events in Syria and Palestine. Amauvy, king of Jerusalem, died, and his son, Baldwin IV, was clothed with the ensigns and powers of royalty. He met Saladin near Ashkelon, and though the soldiers of the Egyptian sultan were numerous and well appointed, yet they yielded to the desperate valour of the knights and soldiers of Baldwin. The army of Saladin was so much enfeebled by this unexpected repulse, that the shattered remains hastened toward Egypt; but many of them perished in the desert, and the return to Cairo was marked with disgrace.^c

A. D. 1180.—Naser Ledinillah was now caliph of Bagdad, and, to secure his interest in Egypt, he sent a splendid embassy to Grand Cairo to acknowledge Saladin as lawful sultan. This acknowledgment of the eastern caliph elated

^c Renaudot. Hist. Pat. Alex. p. 542.

Saladin, and gave him more importance in the state ; for though the successors of Mohammed had lost their temporal power, yet they maintained a sacred character, which, in the eye of the Mohammedans, rendered their countenance and approbation of great avail. Saladin, feeling the importance of this newly-acquired dignity, was zealous in performing deeds of heroism worthy of his rank ; and Syria, which had long been convulsed, was then in still greater confusion, and demanded his immediate presence.

Having arranged his affairs at home, Saladin marched for Syria with a considerable army, but was repulsed in his first attempts to secure and extend his possessions in that province. Both at Aleppo and Mossul his armies were defeated, and during his absence Egypt was in danger. The christians of the crusade fitted out a fleet against it in the Red sea, and symptoms of disaffection appeared at home ; but Saladin vigor-

ously dispelled the clouds, and quickly averted the threatening storm. The aspect of affairs became more serene; and we are now to view him in a train of success.

To trace his progress in Syria, would be to follow him from field to siege, and from siege to battle. His conquests were various, and Aleppo, together with Mosul, which had formerly stood in proud defiance, were now forced to surrender before him. While the colossal power of Saladin was trampling under foot the districts of Syria, the kingdom of Palestine was losing its strength, and hastening to ruin. Baldwin IV was a prince of a weak body, as well as a feeble mind; and his numerous diseases induced a leprosy which terminated his days. Baldwin V, who was his nephew and successor, did not survive him seven months; and the path to the throne was keenly disputed.

While Baldwin IV was king of Jerusalem, his eldest sister Sybilla was mar-

ried to Guy de Lusignan, of the family of La Marche, who had come in pilgrimage to the Holy land. Baldwin being unqualified for government, either by strength of body or mind, constituted his brother-in-law regent of the kingdom; but Raymond, a prince of the crusade, and count of Tripoli, was enraged at this transaction, and brandished his sword with vengeance. To whom, said Raymond, should the kingdom look for assistance and direction in time of need, but to him whose merits and connections hold him up to view? And so powerful was the party of this aspiring lord, that Baldwin found it expedient to displace Guy de Lusignan, and appoint Raymond to the government of the kingdom.

As so much desire of power appeared among the contending parties while Baldwin IV was upon the throne; and as his nephew, Baldwin V, died so soon after his coronation, it was frequently suggested that undue means had prema-

turely cut off the young king. But whatever was the occasion of his death, his mother Sybilla kept the event a profound secret, till she had secured in her favour the interest of the patriarch of Jerusalem and the knights of the Temple. The palace was completely guarded with troops; and the first intimation which the people received of the death of their king, was the proclamation which announced the accession of Sybilla and her husband to the crown of Jerusalem. Raymond count of Tripoli, and the whole of his adherents, vowed revenge.

It was represented to the queen, that there neither was, nor could be any objection offered against her elevation to the throne; but that Guy de Lusignan, though her husband, and graceful in his appearance, was destitute of that courage and martial experience which could fit him for the perilous situation in which he was placed. They assured her of their countenance and support, provid-

ed she would divorce her husband and reign alone. Sybilla felt keenly all the injuries she had suffered, and the former wounds had not yet ceased to fester; but she was a woman of discernment, and knew how to take deep and effectual counsel.

With apparent readiness she complied with the proposal: Guy was divorced; and, by the hands of the patriarch, amid the shouts of general joy, the crown royal was placed upon the head of Sybilla. The queen rose with graceful deportment, and, with the utmost coolness and resolution, took the crown from her own head and placed it upon that of Lusignan. By private and previous agreement, he had placed himself near her throne; and having given him the crown, she embraced him as her husband, and hailed him king. The whole assembly were struck with astonishment; but the banner of the Templars was waved for their protection,

and those who would not applaud, durst not murmur.

In this feeble and distracted state of the kingdom, the eye of Saladin was directed toward Jerusalem; but several places of strength and consideration must be taken before the Holy city could be approached. An ambitious man and a conqueror is seldom deficient in finding reasons for attempting a measure which points to success and aggrandisement; but, in this case, reasons for a war with Jerusalem were obviously presented. The christians of the crusade had often disturbed the Moslem caravans in going to Mecca, or returning from their pilgrimage; and, of late, Arnold, the lord of Carac,^d had broken the treaty which subsisted between him and Saladin, and plundered an Egyptian caravan on its way to Mecca. Christian writers assert, that the count of Tripoli, in revenge for losing the kingdom of Jeru-

^d Called, also, Renaud de Châtillon.

saalem, secretly wished for its destruction, and encouraged the hostile project of Saladin. They even maintain, that to disguise the confederacy, and keep the count of Tripoli out of view, it was agreed between the parties that Tiberias, which belonged to Raymond, should be wrested from his power; but in its stead a reward more valuable was afterwards to be bestowed.^a

The count of Tripoli, under pretence of being reconciled to Sybilla and her husband, appeared at Jerusalem, and induced them to send a powerful army to succour and support Tiberias. But the town being invested by collusion, was easily subdued, and the king of Jerusalem, unacquainted with the stratagem, and indignant at its fall, ardently desired to meet Saladin in the field. The armies engaged in conflict, but the consequence was loss and dismay to Lusig-

^a Abulpharaj. p. 271; Renaudot. Hist. Pat. p. 544; Vertot, tom. i, livre 2.

nan. His chief disaster, however, was occasioned by injudiciously encamping on a mountainous piece of ground where no water could be procured. To increase their danger and their thirst, the sultan of Egypt set fire to the trees, the furze, and the grass, which surrounded them; and they were forced to descend for safety, and for water. In this weak and desperate condition, the numerous troops of Saladin rushed upon the christians, and completely subdued them. The whole knights of both orders were nearly cut off; and scarcely was there a soldier left to return to Jerusalem.

Before the tent of Saladin, many a proud warrior and steady christian preferred suffering or death to mercy and preservation, upon the terms of professing the Mohammedan faith. So unreasonably eager were the christian warriors to become martyrs, that many of the common soldiers pretended to be knights, that their treatment might be more severe; and that an opportunity

might be afforded, of submitting to a voluntary death. A species of refined cruelty was practised upon Lusignan, and Arnold, lord of Carac, who had been honoured with a superb tent, which Saladin had prepared for their reception. The season was warm, the sand burning hot; and while the captives were panting with anxiety, their jaws were parched, and their hearts ready to faint. In this distressful plight, a cup of sherbet, cooled in snow, which had been brought from the mountains of Armenia, was presented to the thirsty Lusignan; and after a comforting draught had refreshed the king of Jerusalem, the hand of Arnold was eagerly stretched out to receive the delicious liquor. But in this moment of expectation, and half realized hope, the cruel Saladin frowned with anger and forbade the consolation.

The king's person was sacred in the presence of the sultan; but Arnold had been a thorn in the pilgrims way to

Mecca, and many sorrows he had imposed upon the followers of the prophet. The gates of death therefore he must not pass, unless he abjured the religion of Jesus, and embraced the faith of Mohammed. By a practice, which time had rendered sacred in Persia and Arabia, the offer of meat or of drink, nay the tasting of salt,^b which seasons the food, was an emblem of safety, and a pledge of protection. Saladin therefore refused the cup to Arnold, a his life must be taken away, unless he embraced the religion of the Arabian prophet. Arnold having heard the proposal, re-

^b Ayub, or Jacob Ben Laith, a freebooter of Persia, entered by night into the palace of an eastern prince, and, when he was ready to depart with much booty, his foot stumbled upon something on the floor. Attempting to know if it were any thing valuable, he put it to his mouth, and found it to be salt. Immediately he quitted his booty, and retired in peace, for he had tasted salt, which was the symbol and pledge of hospitality; and his conscience was checked by the influence of a prevailing prejudice, when integrity and the principles of justice had no effect. Harmer's Observations, vol. iv, p. 461, &c.

jected it with the scorn of a soldier, and the fidelity of a true christian. Saladin had sworn revenge, and with one stroke of his scymitar Arnold's head was severed from his body.¹

Lusignan was sent prisoner to Damascus ; and Saladin seperating his army into detachments, passed with conquering steps from Galilee into Samaria, and from Samaria into many other parts of Palestine. He took by force, or received upon surrender, many towns and cities of importance. Among these were Nazareth, Cæsaria, Acca, Jaffa, and Sidon. From Ramla he lifted up a wishful eye toward the hills of Jerusalem, and expected by one vigorous effort to take the city, and wrest Palestine from the dominion of the crusade. Might was in all his operations, and terror in his steps. The waving of his armour was the signal of death ; and his

¹ D' Herbelot, titre Salahedin ; et Vertot. tom i, livre 2.

paths were marked with desolation. Beheld at a distance, he was terrible, and when viewed at hand his garments were seen to be stained with blood. His scymitar was still reeking with gore, and his hand was lifted up for destruction. Thus being seen before Jerusalem, Sybilla, the queen, trembled, and floods of tears were shed throughout the city. More than 50,000 inhabitants were inclosed within its walls ; but the flower of the nation was destroyed, and those who remained in the city were ill prepared for defence. The severe and rigorous conduct of the rulers of the crusade, toward those who differed from them in sentiments of religion, disposed the oriental christians to prefer the Moslem to the christian yoke. Scarcely, therefore, were they to be trusted in a time of trial, for they were more likely to invite, than obstruct the approach of Saladin. The queen, too, was alarmed for the safety of her husband, who was still at Damascus, in the power of

Saladin. While the consultations lasted, which were naturally produced among the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the enemy approached the walls, and was apparently ready to take possession of the town. The faint resistance of the besieged, seemed rather to encourage than deter the foe.^b

To avoid the horrors of the city being stormed, and to obtain mercy from the powerful Saladin, the queen sent an humble and respectful embassy, with an offer to capitulate at discretion; but the haughty conqueror replied, that he would enter, sword in hand, and shew such mercy to the christians as they had done at Jerusalem, when they took that city from the Mohammedans. The hands, which before were feeble, were now lifted up with vigour. There was but one mind, and one sentiment in the city; and the general cry was victory or

^b D'Herbelot, titre Salahedin; Renaudot, Hist. Pat., p. 545; and Vertot, tom. 2. livre 2.

death : but still the attempt was hazardous, and the issue might be fatal. The forces of Saladin were numerous, and his resources great ; therefore Balian, the prince of Ramla's son, seized a flag of truce, and with the approbation of the citizens approached Saladin, and thus addressed him :

‘ We have heard your declaration,
‘ and marked the tendency of your conduct. I have come by commandment,
‘ to state the resolution of the inhabitants of this city, who stand firm to
‘ their purpose, on the basis of despair.
‘ We are yet numerous in the city ; and
‘ though most of us are little inured to
‘ arms ; though many are dejected,
‘ whom you yourself have made widows
‘ and fatherless ; yet if you still thirst
‘ for blood, your attempt, and even your
‘ victory, shall cost you dear. You have
‘ made a breach in our walls ; and with
‘ one foot advanced, you are ready to
‘ burst into the city ; but we will obstruct
‘ your progress, and raise bul-

‘ warks, even with the bodies of the
‘ slain. While we keep you at bay, and
‘ look upon destruction, we will cast off
‘ nature’s form, and in the shape of
‘ monsters, we will be merciful in the
‘ midst of cruelty. Our swords quiver-
‘ ing with the last movements of com-
‘ passion, shall enter the vitals of our de-
‘ fenceless friends; and thus we will
‘ shield our wives, from the danger of
‘ your foul embrace; our daughters,
‘ from the pangs of violated chastity;
‘ and our young men, from slavery, and
‘ worse than death.

‘ Desperate with revenge, we will
‘ murder the 5,000 Moslem prisoners,
‘ whom we retain in custody. The ce-
‘ lebrated mosque, which you hold sa-
‘ cred, shall be thrown down; and
‘ nothing living or dead shall remain,
‘ which you can receive as booty, or re-
‘ joice in as spoils. Upon the ruins of
‘ the sacred city, the survivors will meet
‘ you with firmness; and they have
‘ sworn upon the altar of God, that not

‘ one of them shall be taken alive ; and
‘ that also in the agonies of despair,
‘ more than one Musselman shall fall by
‘ every christian’s side.’^f

Saladin was aware, what despair in her most frantic moments can accomplish ; and having heard the speech of Balian, he mitigated his demands, and changed the tenor of his plan. He accepted without blood the surrender of the city ; and mercifully treated the inhabitants. The oriental and Greek christians he permitted to remain in the city ; but the French,^g the Latins, the English, and the Germans, were required to depart. Saladin in his former courses had committed many acts of cruelty ; and though compassion was not a stranger to his heart ; yet through envy and ambition, mercy was often excluded. Upon the taking of Jerusalem

^f Abulpharaj. p. 273, 274.

^g The people engaged in the crusades were all denominated Franks.

large sums of money were given for protection ; and the knights of the hospital were allowed twelve months to prepare their sick and wounded for departing from Jerusalem.^o

A. D. 1187.—Saladin made a triumphant entry into Jerusalem, and, along with the power of the Saracens, he restored the religion of Mohammed. The grand mosque of Omar, which Godfrey de Bouillon had converted into a christian church, was purified with rose water, and reconverted into a mosque. The cross, which was overlaid with gold, was thrown down from the dome, and dragged with contempt through the streets of Jerusalem. The Saracens shouted with joy, but the christians hung their heads with sorrow and shame.

Sybilla, the queen, took refuge in Ashkelon ; and when that city was afterwards besieged and taken by Saladin, it was stipulated in the articles of capi-

^o D'Herbelot, titre Salahedin ; Sanutus, lib. iii, c. 8 ; et Vertot, tom. i, liv. 2.

tulation, that Guy de Lusignan should renounce every claim to the kingdom of Palestine ; and when this deed was executed, that he and his fellow prisoners should be restored to liberty. Saladin now hastened to Tyre, for it was become the centre of union among the dispersed of the crusade. The sultan of Egypt approached this city with all the confidence of success; but he met with resistance, which he neither expected, nor was prepared to overcome.

Conrad, a son of the marquis of Montserrat, had left Europe, and arrived on the coast of Palestine, to assist in the crusades; and not knowing what changes had taken place, he was only prevented from falling into the hands of the Saracens, by observing the hostile flag flying on the walls of Jaffa. Suddenly he altered his course, and entered the port of Tyre; but found the whole city in an uproar, and Saladin at the gates. The influence and courage of Conrad dispelled the fears of the city, and inspired

the people with confidence. A fleet of Egyptian vessels entered the harbour, to support the sultan; but they were all, or mostly destroyed. Saladin began to despair; but, before he resolved to raise the siege, he tried a well devised scheme to bend the firm spirit of Conrad, and bring him to terms of accomodation.

His father the marquis, was present at the battle of Tiberias, and became a prisoner to Saladin. A herald was sent into the city to inform Conrad, that his father's life was in danger, if Tyre did not instantly surrender. The feelings of a son wrought high in the breast of Conrad, and much was he disposed to relieve and protect his father; but honour and duty, the pride of family, and the love of fame, forbade him to comply. In a dignified tone of firmness and duty, he dared the threatening sultan to tarnish his honour, and expose himself to infamy, by putting a prisoner to death. Saladin felt the challenge, raised the siege, and retired to Damas-

cus. There he paused for a little, and then pursued his conquests till the armies of the crusade had few places left in Syria, but Antioch, Tripoli, and Tyre.^b

Conrad gained so completely the affections of the Tyrians, that when Guy de Lusignan claimed the government of the town, he was refused admittance into the city; and young Montserrat was declared to be prince and sovereign. Lusignan was supported by the Templars; and, having a considerable number of warriors in his train, he appeared in a situation capable of resuming the sword of battle. But it would not have been expedient for those who were engaged in the same common cause, to turn their arms against each other; and, therefore, the dethroned king resolved to make an attempt upon some of the cities which Saladin possessed. At Ashkelon he had resigned every pretension to the crown

^b Abulpharaj. p. 274; et Vertot, tom. ii, liv. 2.

of Jerusalem ; but national treaties are often too little regarded ; and it was easy for Guy de Lusignan to find an apology for breaking an engagement, which was demanded by force, and extorted in an hour of misery.

The town of Acca appeared to be the most proper for a trial of strength between the parties at war. Having a harbour for ships, it was peculiarly valuable ; and if the armies of the crusade could command that port, they might yet hope to recover the Holy land. The whole of Europe was shocked by the unexpected fall of Jerusalem, and all ranks were anxious to drive the Moham-medans from the land of Palestine.

A. D. 1188.—It was in this temper of mind, that William archbishop of Tyre, found the greater part of Europe, when he was employed to solicit a third crusade. England, France, and Germany, were ready at his call ; but Spain, being engaged in war with the Saracens and Moors, was unable to contribute her

share, for sending relief to the Holy land. Henry II of England, stood pledged to support a crusade by his personal presence. The murder of Thomas a Becket, archbishop of Canterbury, was attributed to him by the pope; and though the king appears to have been innocent, yet the thunder of Rome was hurled, and Henry must plead for pardon. The condition upon which it was received, was not easily fulfilled.

His age, and the embarrassing circumstances of his kingdom, not only afforded a plausible pretext for delaying the journey, but were real difficulties in the way of accomplishing it. But when the armies of the crusade were humbled, when Palestine was regained by the Mohammedans, and when the Holy city itself was profaned, the agitated affairs of his own kingdom seemed to vanish before the eye of Henry. It even appeared, as if he had forgotten his age, and the sinews of his arm acquired unusual strength; but while, in imagina-

tion and spirit, he thus became strong for the conflict, the feebleness of death arrived, and his earthly career was ended.

A. D. 1189.—Richard I succeeded his father in the kingdom, and carried forward the resolutions which Henry had formed. Much improvident alienation of property had the defence of the Holy land occasioned, and Richard was not the least profuse in providing funds for the crusade. Manors, valuable offices, and places of trust, were disposed of for money; and Richard had treasures in store to meet disappointment and delay. The animosities of princes were forgotten; and they joined their forces in a strong bond of union, that they might go with success to the land of Judea.^c

Upon the 29th of June 1190, the kings of France and England met, by agree-

^c D'Herbelot, titre Salaheddin; et Jac. de Vitriaco abbreviata, c. 99.

ment, on the borders of Burgundy ; and the united army amounted to 100,000 men. Having adjusted their plans, they separated and took different routes; and, to avoid the dangers which had formerly been experienced by land, they resolved to take their course by sea. Philip II, the king of France, set sail from Genoa, and Richard of England from Marseilles. They met by appointment at the port of Messina, in the island of Sicily, where, to escape the dangers of the sea, they spent the stormy months of winter. During that season of leisure and idleness, hurtful misunderstandings sprung up; but, after many commotions, and some acts of violence, the champions of the crusade departed in peace.

The fleet of the king of England was driven by storms upon the shore of Cyprus; and Isaac, the prince of that island, pillaged the vessels, and refused shelter to the ship-wrecked multitude. The high spirit of Richard resented this base-

ness ; and notwithstanding the weakness and fatigue of his much-exhausted soldiers, he landed them upon the island, and took ample vengeance. Having subdued the country, he retained it in his own possession, cast the prince, or emperor, as he styled himself, into fetters ; and carried him, together with his daughter, into the land of Syria. In the meantime, the christian army before Acca, had been increased by various crusades, from different maritime states ; and Flanders, Friesland, and Denmark, had poured in their hardy soldiers ; while, throughout the vast extent of Asia and Africa, supplies had been sent to the support of Saladin.

Frederick Barbarossa, the emperor of Germany, left Europe at an earlier period than Philip, or Richard ; and in his journey by land, the troops suffered much, and the emperor died in Cilicia. His son, the duke of Suabia, advanced to Acca ; but the army, which amounted to 150,000 when it left Germany, was

now reduced to 5,000. These too, were wayworn and sick ; and they found the army before Acca, in a situation, as to health, not more desirable than their own. They joined issue with the other warriors ; but the misery of the Germans, was still increasing. The language of their country was not understood in the camp of the crusade ; and when the sick and wounded were separated from their friends, their wants could not be easily understood, nor readily supplied. Some gentlemen of Germany, who had gone by sea to Acca, took the sails of their ships and constructed tents, for the shelter of their infirm and wounded countrymen. Upon this scanty, but benevolent and praiseworthy foundation, there was afterwards established an order of knighthood. The institution was confined entirely to Germans, and the members were denominated the Teutonic knights of S^t Mary.ⁱ

ⁱ Vertot, tom. i, liv. 2.

The king of France arrived at Acca, while Richard of England was detained at Cyprus, and Philip found the seige in doubtful issue. Saladin had successfully thrown succours into the garrison, and the armies of the crusade had been strengthened by repeated arrivals from Europe. The presence, the fame, and the power, of the French king gave fresh spirits and energy to the besieging army; but Philip did not venture to hazard the last effort for taking the town, till the king of England should arrive. Philip Augustus, the king of France, would have been highly gratified, if Acca had fallen by his assistance alone; but if the attempt should be unsuccessful, the whole blame would have been ascribed to his presumption and want of skill.

While, in these circumstances, he was waiting, with anxiety and doubt, upon the 8th of June, A. D. 1191 the fleet of Richard cast anchor in the bay of Acca; and, as soon as possible, the army

entered the camp. The united skill of Philip and Richard, as well as the combined strength of their armies, were now ardently employed to compel the surrender of the city ; but being opposed by the dexterity of Saladin, and the experience of his chief general, the struggle was great, and the destruction dreadful. But the advantage of unity in council lay with Saladin, for though his army was recruited from many nations, yet he alone was head, and his commands were obeyed. Among the christians, on the contrary, there were many masters, and a diversity of views. General claims, and partial misunderstandings might have been easily adjusted ; but there were distracting pretensions which related to the kingdom of Palestine.

Sybilla, the wife of Lusignan, had died at the siege of Acca, and then a question arose with respect to the crown of Jerusalem. To be called king of the Holy land was then a name without re-

ality ; but much hope was entertained, that the strength of the west, concentrated in the crusade, would restore Palestine to the christian powers. Isabella the only surviving sister of the late king Baldwin V, stepped forward with her pretensions to the crown.

At eight years of age she had been espoused to Humphrey de Thoron ; but the far-famed Conrad, the lord of Tyre, had gained her affections, and procured a divorce. The powerful Conrad, as the husband of this princess, set forth his claim to the kingdom ; and whether just, or spurious, his name and prowess gave it strength. Guy de Lusignan maintained, that the dignity to which he had been raised could not be annulled by the death of his wife : while Humphrey de Thoron insisted, that the unjust divorce, to which he had been improperly subjected, could not alter the claim which his marriage had given him. These jarring interests sprung up at an early period of the siege ; and to

prevent their fatal effects, the violence of contention was suspended by mutual consent, till the merits should be decided by Philip and Richard upon their arrival at the camp.

Sybilla, the deceased queen, and Isabella, who then laid claim to the crown, were grand-children of Foulk of Anjou, who was great-grand-father of Richard Plantagenet the king of England, to whom, as one of the arbitrators, the matter in dispute was submitted. Richard declared for Guy de Lusignan, and was joined in opinion by the knights hospitallars, together with other champions of the crusade. Philip Augustus gave his vote for Conrad, and with his decision, the Genoese, the Germans, and the knights of the temple, agreed. As to Humphrey de Thoron, his claim was not determined. After various interviews and threatenings of danger, it was amicably agreed, that Lusignan should continue, during his life, to be addressed as king of Jerusalem; and

that Conrad, prince of Tyre, in right of his wife, should be declared indefeasible heir of the crown.

A. D. 1191.—But notwithstanding the jealousies and discontentments which prevailed in the christian army, the Saracens, who were shut up in Acca, began to faint ; and Saladin found it expedient to offer terms of capitulation. The garrison were allowed to march out with the honours of war ; but a sum of money was paid for their freedom. As the siege had lasted somewhat more than two years, and as so many thousands were engaged in the warfare, who will venture to state correctly the loss which was sustained ? On either side the havoc has been estimated at 300,000 lives ; and when the flower of Europe, Asia, and Africa, perished, the computation, though vast, does not appear to be extravagant. As Acca was now in possession of the christians, the hospitallars of S^t. John fixed their residence in that city, and from the time of this transac-

tion, the town has been denominated S^t. John d'Acre.^a

The kings of England had but lately appeared on the great theatre of conquest and fame, whereas those of France, from their situation and circumstances, had been more known and celebrated in war. Philip Augustus was one of the greatest princes who had appeared since Charlemagne; and therefore he entered the camp of S^t. John d'Acre with many prejudices in his favour; but the address and courage of Richard, king of England, struck the whole armies with surprise; and in the sight of the Saracen, as well as the christian warriors, Philip of France was cast into the shade.

Scarcely was the capitulation of Acca settled, when the French king made known his intention of returning home,

^a Abulpharaj, p. 275; Abulfed. vol. iv, p. 99, &c.; D'Herbelot, titre Salaheddin, & Sanut. lib. iii, pt. 10, c. 3, 4.

Many might have been the reasons which produced this sudden determination, and some of them are ascribed to bad health, and danger from poison; but the principal causes seem to have been, disgust at the celebrity of his rival, and unjustifiable designs of aggrandizing himself at home, in Richard's absence. If honour, nay, if vows could have bound him, he must have pursued a different course; but he left Syria, and his departure was disgraceful. To injure the character of Richard, and, if possible, to veil his own perfidy, Philip falsely accused the king of England of hiring ruffians to murder Conrad. But the truth is, that the prince of Tyre had given offence to the old man of the mountain, and, having refused redress, that revengeful chief sent assassins, who cruelly put him to death.*

The origin, name, and conduct, of

* Jac. de Vitriaco abbreviata, c. 98, 99.

the tribe of assassins are thus recorded : Hassan Sabah was a Persian of science, and travelled much in pursuit of knowledge. He began to establish a new religious sect ; and, in the career of his ambition, founded a dynasty. He made conquests of considerable importance, and took up his residence in the castle of Rûdbar ; but afterwards removed to Almût, which was a place of greater strength. His followers were taught the most absolute submission to their chief ; and if they did his will, they were promised the most delightful abodes in Paradise. The chief of that people became terrible among the nations ; for wherever he received an offence, real or imaginary, thither his servants secretly found access ; and neither sovereign nor subject was secure from vengeance. They carried a concealed dagger, and, in the least suspected situation, stabbed, and put to death, the objects of their resentment. It was in

this manner, and by such means, that Conrad suffered death.

The prince of this tribe was called in Arabic Sheik al Gebal, that is, the senior of the mountain ; for the part of the Persian Irac, over which he presided, was the most elevated district of the country. His title, therefore, was the senior of the mountain ; but the historians of the crusade, translating the word Sheik literally, denominated him the old man, instead of the prince or lord of the mountain. The assassins entertained some fanatical and dangerous notions about religion ; and though they were occasionally weakened, yet they continued to infest the eastern world, till, in the year 1172, they were finally destroyed by Bibars, the sultan of Egypt. They were called assassins by the writers of the west, either from Hassan their founder, or from the name of their concealed poniard, and hence secret

and determined murderers are denominated assassins.^b

While the king of France was pursuing unfriendly measures at home, Richard was warmly engaged in arranging the affairs of the Holy land. Philip, with a show of zeal for the interests of the crusade, left in Palestine, the duke of Burgundy, with 10,000 men. Richard, with the troops which were at his command, laid siege to Ashkelon, took the city, and added other towns and possessions to the remaining fragments of the kingdom of Jerusalem. It was sufficiently evident, that these successful efforts were intended, as preliminary measures, for making a grand attack upon the city of Jerusalem. When Saladin was compelled to leave Ashkelon, he hastened to the Holy city ; and the king of England, having paused during the months of winter, followed him to Je-

^b D'Herbelot, titre Hussan Sabah; et Deguignes, tom. i, liv. 6.

rusalem. The approach of Richard spread consternation through the city; and it required all the influence and address of the Egyptian sultan to prevent the citizens from delivering the keys to Richard Plantagenet.

Still, however, Saladin's prospect of success brightened; and when the hour of surrender appeared to have arrived, suddenly the king of England's army stopped, and the pursuit of victory was abandoned. The number of his soldiers had indeed been diminished by the fatigues and calamities of war, and there was a general desire of returning home. These occurrences were marked, and eagerly aggravated, by the duke of Burgundy, who, like his master, the king of France, was jealous of Richard, and desirous of bringing him into disgrace.

But whatever was the cause of deserting Jerusalem at the moment it might have been taken, we may presume that the fault was not in the king of England,

and that it did not accord with any wish or desire of his, though the enemies of Richard have painted it in different colours. He heard the resolution with astonishment ; he saw their retreat with affliction ; he pled and threatened, but his prayers and threats were in vain. His laurels began to wither on his brow, and in agony he ascended a hill in sight of Jerusalem, to take his last look of the Holy city. But so completely was he overwhelmed with grief and shame, that he wrapt his face in his garment, in order that he might not behold the hill of Calvary, which he could not deliver from the power of the Turks.

But in his retreat Richard was still formidable. His courage was terrible to his enemies ; and, in token of martial prowess, he was surnamed *Cœur de Lion*.^c With considerable advantage he finished a truce with Saladin, for the space of three years and upwards. Ash-

^c That is, Lion-hearted.

kelon and Ramla were to be dismantled ; Tripoli and Antioch were to be respected by the Turks ; and the whole sea-coast, from Jaffa to Tyre, was to be possessed by the christians. The pilgrims of Europe were to be under the protection of Saladin, and to enjoy every comfort, as if Jerusalem had not been taken. Saladin and Richard were struck with each others greatness ; and the historians of either party have done ample justice to the conduct of the heroes. The advantageous terms which Richard procured in a season of desertion and departure, are sufficient proofs of his wisdom and greatness. There was one proposal, however, in the terms of agreement, which may imply a greater regard to family aggrandisement, than to the general cause of the crusades. A marriage was suggested between Al Adel, a brother of the sultan of Egypt, and the queen dowager of Sicily, who was sister to the king of England. Though Richard may be charged with

undue attention to the interests of his own family, yet an ingenious advocate might plead successfully in his behalf, and shew, that private interest was in that respect the public good.

The conduct of Richard's troops would not allow him to persist in the attack upon Jerusalem; and, if the venerable city could not be taken by force, it was promoting the comfort of the christian pilgrims to have it placed under the direction of those who would yield them protection. It was stipulated, in the proposal of marriage, that Al Adel should be proclaimed king of Jerusalem, and S^t. John d'Acre was to be given in dower with the sister of Richard. Hopes might be entertained, that Al Adel, through the influence of a christian wife, might be persuaded to embrace the christian cause, or at least, in case of progeny, that the heir to the kingdom might prefer and adopt the sentiments of his mother. But the difference of religious opinions, and na-

tional manners were unfriendly to the compact ; and after mature deliberation the marriage proposal was mutually rejected. But the treaty in all its other parts was brought to a conclusion, and sanctioned with every usual solemnity.^f

Richard, on his way to England, met with many difficulties, and was taken prisoner by the sinister conduct of his enemies ; but he was soon set at liberty by the interposition of his subjects, and the influence of the pope. He was received at home with great demonstrations of joy ; and was the first king, of the Norman race, who displayed much attachment to England, or was much beloved by his English subjects. After escaping many dangers in Syria and Palestine, he died upon the 6th of April, A. D. 1199, of a wound, which he received from an arrow in besieging the castle of a refractory vassal.^g

^f Abu fed. vol. iv, p. 123. &c.; D'Herbelot, titre Salaheddin, et Sanut. lib. iii. p. 10, c. 7.

^g Jac. de Vitriaco, abbrev. c. 99.

The departure of Richard having delivered Saladin from the intrusions of a formidable enemy, he put the affairs of state in order, and returned to his favourite residence at Damascus. His health had been much impaired by the toils of a military life; and he had suffered greatly by the uncommon resistance which was necessarily required in opposing the crusades. He was seized with a loss of appetite, his spirits sunk; and at the age of little more than fifty-five years, he finished a life of labour and success. He had reigned about twenty-four years over Egypt, and almost nineteen over Syria.

A. D. 1193.—The mourning, which was universal throughout the realm, sunk deeper than the exterior trappings of woe. He was a great, a generous, and a virtuous prince. By address, courage, and wisdom, he rose from an humble station, to the exalted rank in which he died. Ambition was the leading tendency of his character; and so eagerly

did he strive for power and conquest, that though he owed every thing to Nouredin, yet he was guilty of ingratitude. The character of the times in which he lived, and the nature of his pursuits, did not permit him to be altogether free from violence; but, in general, he was a just and benevolent prince. He did not oppress his subjects; and though, in that unsettled state of society, he might have fleeced the rich, and harassed the poor, yet he often remitted the tribute which was due. He was illustrious in works of public charity, and encouraged every valuable pursuit. He was a devout Musleman, and punctually performed the various services which his religion enjoined. He set a high value upon the Sonnite traditions, and was rather gloomy and superstitious in his views.

He left sixteen or seventeen sons, and one daughter. His kingdom, which had been rapidly acquired, was broken into pieces at his death. His principal Sy-

rian dominions were allotted to his eldest son Afdel; Al Aziz, his second, received the kingdom of Egypt; and Daher, the third, was constituted lord of Aleppo. The rest of his sons do not appear to have been brought into notice; for, to prevent competition and strife, their uncles and cousins were permitted to retain those governments and possessions which they severally enjoyed at the death of Saladin; and his daughter was bestowed in marriage upon a son of her uncle Maleh Al Adel.^c

A. D. 1193.—Adel, the eldest son of Saladin, was not content with the sovereignty of Damascus, but haughtily and imprudently insisted, that all those who had participated of his father's dominions, should be subject to the prince of Damascus, as their liege lord. An attempt so unwarranted and unreasonable produced its natural effect, and

^c D'Herbelot, titre Salaheddin; Abulpharaj. p. 276, 277; et Renaudot. p. 547.

those whom he was desirous of governing, were eager to divest him of his power. He was watched with a jealous eye, and his imprudent conduct opened a way for many troubles. He had been brought up in the luxuries of a court; the influence of dissipation led him astray. Taught to expect power and indulgence, he had been more anxious to revel in the haunts of vice, than to acquire those virtues which could qualify him to be a king.

Rash and inconsiderate, he sought not the council of those who had been the friends and confidants of his father; but he elected a young vizer, and appointed men of inexperience to the other important offices of state. The neglected officers and generals of Saladin did not retire into obscurity, in the dominions of Afdel, but went in disgust to the courts of Egypt and Aleppo. Those who descended into Egypt, insinuated themselves into the councils of Al Aziz, and kindled the latent spark of ambi-

tion. They stimulated him to the overthrow of his brother Afdel, and the subjugation of Damascus. In pursuance of this scheme, he was joined by his uncle Al Adel, the lord of Carac. A. D. 1195, they took the city of Damascus, and Afdel fled. Al Aziz, being declared governor of the city, was prayed for in the mosques, and the money was coined in his name; but he returned to Egypt, and left his uncle governor of Syria.

Afdel applied to Naser Ledinillah, the caliph of Bagdad, and from him he received strong assurances of protection; but the power of the caliphs continued to be only in name, and no effectual relief could be derived from Bagdad. About this time Moez Shamsalmolek, nephew of Saladin, and emir of Yeman, aspired to the office of caliph, in opposition to Naser Ledinillah; but he was rejected and put to death. Al Aziz, who was a prince as corrupt, and less attractive in his manners than his brother Afdel, did not long enjoy the honours of

his conquest, for in the midst of his pursuits he died.

Upon this event, Afdel returned to his dominions, and was invited to be sultan of Egypt, or, according to others, to take the chief direction of public affairs, till the son of Al Aziz should be of sufficient age for managing the affairs of state. With so great an acquisition of power, as the kingdom, or regency of Egypt, Al Afdel immediately determined to recover the sovereignty of Damascus, which was then possessed by his uncle Al Adel. To insure him more completely of success over so powerful an usurper, he secured the assistance of his brother Daher, the lord of Aleppo; and, with their combined forces, they laid siege to Damascus. They had proceeded so far in their attempt that the city was ready to capitulate, when strife breaking out between the brothers, Afdel was deserted by Daher, and obliged to abandon the object of his pursuit. Al Adel, the

brother of Saladin, then directed his successful course to Grand Cairo; and having laid siege to that city, took it, and was declared sultan of Egypt.^d

It was only the unsettled state of Syria which now prevented the crusaders from being driven entirely out of Palestine. They might easily have been crushed or expelled, for their strength was then but weakness; and it was more difficult than ever to procure reinforcements from the west. The pope, who had formerly done little more than stimulate to the crusades, now directed their spirit, and endeavoured to employ them in his own immediate interest. Formerly it was a matter of dispute, whether the arms of the soldiers of the cross could be turned against christians on any account whatever; but the bishop of Rome now employed them to subdue heretics, and enlarge his temporal do-

^d D'Herbelot, titre Saleheddin; Abulpharaj. p. 280; et Renaudot Hist. Pat. p. 558.

minions. Indulgences, which in former times had only been given to the champions of the crusade, were now profusely bestowed upon those who performed services to the pope; and therefore the ardour for going to Jerusalem abated with the honour and benefit of the journey.

A. D. 1203.—But Pope Innocent III, who possessed an active spirit, and carried the power of the church to its utmost height, was also a strenuous advocate for the recovery of the Holy land. By his assistance and vigour a fourth crusade was appointed, and put under the direction of Montserrat, who was brother to that prince of Tyre who resisted and defeated Saladin. This hero chose rather to go to Palestine by sea; and the doge of Venice stood pledged, for a stipulated sum of money, to supply him with vessels for the voyage. But some unavoidable difficulties producing delay, the army of the crusade engaged in temporal warfare, and were at length

persuaded to interfere in the disputes which shook the throne of Constantinople. The warriors of the crusade, having often suffered from the enmity of the emperor, cheerfully embraced the opportunity of replacing Isaac Angelus on the throne of Byzantium, that from his gratitude they might receive assistance and protection. Afterwards, in the course of events, when another emperor rose up, who was hostile to the crusades, the soldiers of the Holy land hurled him from his station, and placed upon the throne Baldwin, count of Flanders.^f

Al Adel breathed his last at Damascus, in the seventy-third year of his age. He had been successful in acquiring possessions, and, at the time of his death, they were almost as extensive as those of Saladin had been. He was also called Seifaddin Abubeker Mohammed ; and by the name of Safadine he

^f Abulpharaj. p. 282 ; et Jac. de Vitriaco, lib. iii, sub initio.

is generally distinguished by the writers of the crusade. He died in Syria, and his second son, Moadham, immediately seized upon the dominions of Syria, which were by far the most hazardous and important.

A. D. 1218.—Al Camel, having been governor of Egypt when his father died, was joyfully acknowledged sultan of the country; but he entered upon his reign in circumstances of difficult management. Notwithstanding the success of Al Adel in acquiring dominions, yet, during his own reign, the possessions which he had in Syria were much distracted, and the treasury of Egypt was almost exhausted in supporting expensive wars. The internal state of this kingdom, at the time of his death, was far from being tranquil; for the christians had been contending many years among themselves about the choice of a patriarch, and still the flame raged when Al Camel was promoted. The varying degrees of oppression, which

they had long continued to suffer, had not quelled the animosities which subsisted among themselves. The doctrine of Monothelism appears to have been the principal subject of debate ; for, when a new patriarch was elected, he was bound to avow and maintain that opinion. Every commotion of the christians exposed them to greater suspicion, because it was imagined that they were friendly to the arms of the crusade ; but the Melchites were more peculiarly obnoxious, because their views of religion had a greater similarity to those of the western christians.^h

If the Mohammedan affairs in Syria were embroiled, so also were those of the christians ; and in a general council at Rome, a numerous assemblage of ambassadors, from different states and kingdoms, resolved upon a fifth crusade. Their forces were not united in a general body ; but they departed from dif-

^h Renaudot. Hist. Pat. p. 566 et seq.

ferent places, and at different intervals, as it suited their convenience. Having arrived at the place of their destination, in a detached and disjointed manner, nothing of importance was achieved, till the end of May, A. D. 1218, when they set sail from S^t. John d'Acre, and landed near Damietta.

On both sides there was manifested a degree of skill and vigour which have seldom been surpassed. The soldiers of the crusade made such steady and progressive advances, that the town of Damietta was in evident danger; and the sultan of Egypt sent into Syria for the assistance of his brother. Before Moadham, whom the western writers call Coradin, left Damascus, he levelled the walls of Jerusalem, that, in his absence from home, the christian adventurers might not take the city and fortify themselves by its strength. When he arrived in Egypt, he joined his brother with a strong army; but their united forces could not raise the siege. Un-

willing to hazard, by arms, the decision of so important a contest, Al Camel offered terms of such advantage to the besiegers, that they were agreeable to the whole chiefs of the crusade, excepting to D'Albano, the legate of the pope. But such influence had the bishop of Rome acquired throughout the whole christian churches, that the will of his representative overawed every lord and knight who were then in arms upon the banks of the Nile.

The siege was therefore continued; Damietta fell; and the pope's vicegerent rejoiced in his success. The advantage which was thus gained, excited them to further pursuits, and having advanced into the interior of the Delta, the banks were cut, the waters of the Nile encompassed them, and, to avoid destruction, they were compelled to surrender. Thus they lost the important advantages which had been offered as an inducement for a voluntary departure; and now, to the confusion of the legate, and the sorrow

of the army, they were reduced to eat the bread of mercy, and to depend upon the clemency of the sultan for comfort and protection.^a

A. D. 1223.—A congress was held at Ferentino to adopt measures for the relief of the Holy land. The late efforts, both in Palestine and in Egypt, had been unproductive of good effects; and further measures must be taken for the benefit of Palestine. Frederick II of Germany, Thibaud, the king of Navarre, Richard, earl of Cornwall, and many other persons of distinction and influence, waved the banner of the cross. But still their operations were not uniform; they were conducted by different leaders, and guided by partial motives. A considerable time elapsed before the emperor of Germany could leave the affairs of his own kingdom; and, during

^a Jac. de vitriaco, lib. iii; et Olevieri Scholast. in gest. Dei per Francos.

the time of that delay, he was involved in a dispute with the bishop of Rome.

He was commanded by the pope not to depart till he had bowed in obedience to the head of the church. But Frederick despised the mandate, and went in defiance to the Holy land. Powerful were the succours which the emperor conveyed to Palestine, but the circumstances in which he stood threatened to render them of no avail. The orders of the pope had flown to the Holy land upon the swiftness of revenge; and no son of the church durst join in friendship with him or his followers. His rank and influence entitled him to command and take the whole direction of the christian troops; but the orders of an excommunicated prince were not to be obeyed.

How afflicting was the scene, to behold multitudes assembled from foreign lands, to fulfil the general desire of Europe, and yet bound in chains of inaction, by the proud mandates of an usurp-

ed and degrading authority. To take off the restraint, and to promote the object in view, the emperor of Germany, with a greatness of mind suitable to his rank, waved the right to command, and generously proposed that the whole orders of the camp and the field should be given and received in the name of God and Christendom. But the exertions of the soldiers were neither so much united, nor so completely successful, as could have been desired. Jealousies and discontentment pervaded the ranks; and, in the absence of Frederick, the armies of the pope were ravaging the territories of Germany.

The connections and successors of Saladin, who reigned in the different departments of Syria and Palestine, were yet constantly engaged in warfare among themselves; and, during these commotions, Al Camel, the sultan of Egypt, had acquired considerable territories in those parts of the world. Frederick, from the circumstances of the Holy land, and the

situation of his own empire, found it expedient to return home ; but, before leaving Palestine, he entered into a treaty with the sultan of Egypt. Al Camel was anxious to secure the interest of the crusades, in opposition to his enemies in Syria and Palestine, and therefore he delivered to them many towns and possessions in the Holy land. He even granted to them Jerusalem itself, and only retained, for the Mohammedans, the grand mosque of that city, with freedom of worship, and protection from the crusade. Soon after these events, the sultan of Egypt died at Damascus, and had maintained the character of a mild and just prince.^b

A. D. 1238.—At the time of the late sultan's death, Al Adel, one of his younger sons, was governor of Egypt, and the emirs of that country immediately placed him upon the throne of the kingdom. Daud, grandson of Sa-

^b D'Herbelot, titre Aiubiah,

ladin's brother Al Adel, was elected lord of Damascus, but was soon deprived of this preferment by Nojmoddin the eldest son of Al Camel. Encouraged by this success, Nojmoddin extended his views to further steps of aggrandisement. Though in the dynasty of the sultans, the order of succession was rather implied than established, yet the new lord of Damascus laid claim also to the kingdom of Egypt. Scarcely had he left Syria, when Ishmael, lord of Balbec, hastened to Damascus, and re-established himself in those possessions of which Al Camel had lately deprived him. When Nojmoddin arrived at Grand Cairo, his brother Al Adel was either dead or deposed; and the throne being vacant, the aspiring prince was saluted sultan.

A. D. 1240.—The disputed claims in Syria opened a way for indulging the contending parties of the crusade. Long had jealousy and divisions subsisted between the knights of St. John and those of the Temple; and Thibaud, king of

Navarre, favouring the cause of the latter, entered into terms of alliance and friendship with several princes of Syria. They promised protection to the christians; but the view of those Syrian emirs was to acquire strength, in opposition to the sultan of Egypt; and the intention of the contending knights was to raise their own credit higher than that of their opposing brethren. Richard, the earl of Cornwall, and brother of Henry III, the king of England, easily discovered the tendency of that transaction; and found, that the lords of Carac and Damascus were not able to fulfil their treaty. The sultan of Egypt was rising great in his strength, and the discerning eye of Richard marked his growing power, and wished to obtain his friendship.

Nojmoddin approached with his scimitar in one hand, and an offer of friendship in the other. Richard, with the concurrence of various powerful lords, stretched out the hand of peace, and en-

tered into a firm alliance. The treaty which Frederick of Germany had formerly made with the sultan of Egypt, was ratified in its full extent ; and the christians, not only possessed Jerusalem, but had the safety of the pilgrims secured, by enjoying Tyre and every place of importance on the coast of Syria. To this agreement, the Templars refused to accede ; but the treaty was established ; the christian churches were thrown open, and the patriarch of Jerusalem returned to the Holy city.

When Saladin overthrew the Fatimite caliphs in Egypt, he found it necessary to secure himself against their friends and abettors, by placing a strong guard around his throne. This important office he did not entrust to the troops of Egypt, but to the Turkish slaves of Kipzac, whom the Moguls seized in their warlike incursions, and sold into bondage. They were denominated Mam-lukes, which signifies slaves or bond servants. But they also received particular

names from incidental arrangements. Nojmoddin Saleh, when he became sultan, proceeded a step further than any of his predecessors had done, for the Mamlukes were not only his body guards, and admitted into his palace, but they were armed spies, and distributed into different parts of the country, to watch every motion, and to give notice of every cabal. Being trained up for service at their first institution, in a place called Ruda, upon the borders of the sea, they were denominated Baharites, from the Arabic word Baher, which signifies the sea.^c

Having placed his affairs at home in a proper position of defence, Nojmoddin turned his views again toward Syria, and determined to recover by force, what he had lost by guile. To secure the object he had in view, he called the assistance of a barbarous and cruel people

^c Abulpharaj. pro Legom. p. 7; et Deguignes, tom. iv, liv. 21.

who lived upon plunder. They had no country which was properly their own, nor is it well ascertained from what district of the world they sprung. It is, however, probable, as they were called Chorasmians, that they came from the ancient Chorasmia, and passed into Persia, where they became obnoxious, and whence they were driven out.

Directing their course to meet the sultan of Egypt, they approached Jerusalem, and their entrance was proclaimed by fire and shrieks of despair. The town was pillaged, many of the inhabitants were butchered, and even the sacred places were polluted with the bodies of the slain. On the whole of their march, they continued to spread desolation and death. At Gaza, they joined Nojmoddin with his Egyptian army, and the united forces stood in proud and awful defiance. The christian armies had joined the confederate lords of Syria; and they too appeared in terrible array. After spending some

time in skirmishes and partial attacks, a general engagement took place, and, for two days, the issue was doubtful. The sultan of Egypt was at length successful; the shattered remains of the Syrian army returned to Damascus; and, but a few of the intrepid knights escaped the disasters of the field.

Amansur, the prince of Emessa, was general of the Syrian forces, and, in the day of defeat, he was subjected to the unwarrantable frowns of Ishmael the lord of Damascus. But Nojmoddin pursuing his success, laid siege to Damascus with an army under the command of his celebrated general, the warlike Maimoddin. Before his skill and prowess, the haughty Ishmael was himself obliged to flee, and he who but lately insulted Amansur in the day of defeat, was himself driven to seek refuge in a distant region. Maimoddin did not, however, allow the Chorasmians to enter the city of Damascus, and riot with cruelty in its plunder, but assigned them a portion

in a different and less important part of Syria. When they were not engaged in the destruction of nations, the Chorasmiens turned their savage cruelty upon themselves, and were so much detested, and so cruel, that they were finally cut off from being a people.

As the cloud was still resting upon the Holy land, the pope held a council at Lyons, where the attendants were numerous, and many vows were pledged to go in warfare to Jerusalem; but there was none who displayed greater zeal than Lewis IX, the king of France. After spending a proper time in settling the important affairs of his kingdom, he arrived at S^t. Dennis on the 12th of June, A. D. 1248. Having received the Oriflame, or papal standard, which had formerly been displayed by the kings of Rome, Lewis set sail upon the 28th of August, and, with his queen and army, arrived at Limisso, in Cyprus, on the 17th of September following. He was received in an hospitable and friendly

manner by the king of the island, who was a descendant of Guy de Lusignan.

Waiting for the arrival of more troops, and shunning the stormy time of winter, he could not leave Cyprus till the expiration of eight months. Then, with several princes of the royal family, and many lords of France, he embarked his soldiers; set sail for Egypt; and being joined by the knights of S^t. John and the Temple, he arrived in the port of Damietta. To prevent the landing of his army, the beach was lined with Egyptian soldiery; but the king of France threw himself, sword in hand, from the ships into the sea; the troops followed, and having landed against much resistance, an army of 50,000 men encamped upon the shore. This unexpected display of bravery and address struck terror into the inhabitants of Damietta. The fortress was speedily invested, and the garrison, together with the inhabitants of the town, mostly stole away in the night-time, and

left the French masters of that important place.

The sultan of Egypt was at this time busily employed in conquering Syria ; but the fate of Damietta suddenly reached Nojmodddin, and he raised the siege of Emessa. Quickly he issued orders to prepare for a march, and returned with dispatch to recover Damietta. On his way to Egypt, he was affected by a tumor on his thigh, which produced a mortification, and put a period to his life. He was an active prince, and knew how to be severe, as well as merciful. He held the reins of government with a firm hand, and his conduct was well suited to the turbulent temper of the period in which he lived.

A. D. 1249.—The time of Nojmoddin's death was truly critical, the dynasty of the Ayubites were scarcely established on the throne ; and a powerful enemy was triumphing in Egypt. His unexpected dissolution might have been the signal of revolt ; but the danger was

averted by the address of Shajir al Dor. She had been the favourite female of the sultan Nojmoddin, and was as remarkable for discernment, as she was celebrated for beauty. Having been informed by a private messenger of Nojmoddin's death, she assembled the principal lords of the realm, and, under pretence that the sultan was indisposed, and not able to bear the fatigues of state, she induced them to swear an oath of fidelity to his only remaining son Turan Shaw. All this was done as if by the special order of Nojmoddin; and the different authorities of the state were required to obey the sultan-elect. In the meantime Turan Shaw was not in Egypt, and before he had an opportunity of appearing at Grand Cairo, the Ayubite army had harassed the French, and cut off many of their men; but in this time of danger, the ships, which, in a storm, had been separated from the French fleet, appeared on the coast of Egypt, and Lewis being reinforced, left

a garrison in Damietta, and resolved to advance into the country. It was agitated whither he should direct his course, and it was generally agreed that he should march to Grand Cairo.

By the assistance of a guide, a party of the French darted far into the country, with less inconvenience than might have been expected; but, in returning through the town of Mansurah, they were assailed by the inhabitants, and many of them put to death. Enraged at this misfortune, Lewis determined to take ample revenge, and drew out his forces in full array. At this hazardous period, Turan Shaw arrived from Damascus with a numerous army. Having been proclaimed sultan, he hastened with his Syrian forces to join the Egyptian army; and a dreadful battle with the French ensued. Facroddin, the Egyptian general, either fell in battle, or was privately put to death; but the christians were vanquished, and this sixth

crusade was peculiarly unfortunate, as Lewis himself was taken prisoner.

Turan Shaw had received the name of sultan, and was arrayed in the robes of state; but Shajir al Dor, and the grandees about court, sat in reality at the helm of affairs. The Mamlukes and followers of the prince, who had come in his train from the castle of Kipha, saw with dissatisfaction the subordinate power which the sultan possessed; and Turan Shaw himself resolved to vindicate his rights and his station. But, independent of these tokens of impatience and dislike, Shajir al Dor and her party were aware that a sovereign prince could not be contented with the name without the reality of power, and therefore they watched the motions of the sultan, and placed spies in every avenue of the court. The resolution which Turan Shaw had taken of asserting his authority, was soon made known to his enemies, and they resolved to destroy him. Unexpectedly he received a stroke

of a sabre, which was the appointed signal of a general attack ; and immediately he was surrounded with weapons of death. Awe and irresolution prevailed for a moment among the assailants, and in that interval of suspense, the sultan fled and took refuge in a wooden tower upon a bank of the Nile. When his pursuers could not dislodge him, they set fire to the place of refuge; and having thrown himself into the waters of the river to shun destruction by the flames, he was there put to death by the arrows of those who sought his life. His friends fled, and his lifeless body was left exposed upon the beach, till the ambassadors of Mostasem Billah, the caliph of Bagdad, procured leave, and found means to honour it with a funeral.

Raging with that fury which deeds of violence produce, the murderers of the prince, while yet besmeared with his innocent blood, rushed into the presence of Lewis, and presenting the head

of the sultan, expected a reward for his death. It is suggested by some, that the ruffians were desirous of murdering the king of France also; but were overawed and restrained by his appearance and majesty; while others affirm, that he was honoured with the offer of being constituted sultan of Egypt. But nothing is certain excepting that which in reality took place, that to recover his liberty, and avoid impending danger, S^t. Lewis surrendered Damietta, and retired to Syria.^k

A. D. 1250.—Having assassinated Turan Shaw, the Mamlukes swore allegiance to Shajir al Dor, prayed for her in the mosques, and had her name impressed upon the coin of the realm. But sunk as the Egyptians were in the degradation of their country, yet they could not bear to be governed by a woman, who had been a slave. Such was

^k Abulpharaj. p. 323, 324; Joinville, hist. de St. Lewis, fol. A Paris, A. D. 1668, p. 27, 28, &c.

the state of the public mind, that it was deemed necessary to appoint a regent, who might appear publicly in the government of the country. Aibeg, or Ibeg, one of the principal emirs about the court, was chosen for that important office. But still the government was not acceptable to the people; and they raised to the dignity of sultan, Musa al Ashref, a prince of Yemen, and a descendant of Al Camel; but being of tender years, he too must have a regent, and the influence of Ibeg placed himself again at the head of the government. He had great designs of personal aggrandisement; but to conceal his views, and render himself more popular, he had the name of Shajir al Dor expunged from the list of sovereigns, and that of Musa placed next to Turan Shaw, so that the Ayubite line of princes was not interrupted.^b

^b Abulfed. vol. iv, p. 505, &c; et Deguignes, vol. i, liv. 7.

At the time Shajir al Dor was proclaimed sultaness of Egypt, Malek al Nazer, prince of Aleppo, was raised to the throne of Damascus; he also was of the race of Ayub, and a descendant of Al Camel. The kingdoms of Egypt and Damascus were thus again disjoined; jealousy pervaded the countries, and wars often raged between the states. The prince of Damascus put his troops into motion to avenge the murder of his kinsman Turan Shaw; the armies of the two countries met at Abasa, and the Egyptians were routed. Victory being on the side of the Assyrians, the people of Egypt declared for the prince of Damascus, and his name was mentioned in the prayers of the mosque. The young sultan of Egypt belonged also to the family of the Ayubites; but being scarcely nine years of age, he was shut up in the castle of the mountain. But the fortune of the war changed, the Syrians were repulsed, and their general Shamsoddin was slain.

In the day of triumph Ibeg returned to Grand Cairo ; and, in revenge for the preference which had been given to Al Nazer, the prince of Damascus, the people were insulted, and the city given up to plunder. But these injuries were abandoned, and internal peace was restored, by the influence of the caliph of Bagdad, who, since the overthrow of the Fatimites, had continued to be recognized in Egypt, as the Imam of the Mohammedan faith. The partisans of Egypt and Syria had long been struggling to attach to their interests the armies of the crusade ; and Lewis of France, having continued for a while at S^t. John d'Acre, was zealously courted by the agents of each party. After a succession of jealousies and wars, the Mohammedans of Syria and Egypt made peace ; and when Lewis had returned to France, the christians were again opposed as a common enemy.

Public peace with Syria being thus restored, Ibeg pursued his own views of

aggrandisement; and having deposed the young sultan from his exalted station, Al Ashref was the last prince of the Ayubite family who sat upon the throne of Egypt.¹

¹ Abulfed. vol. 5, p. 951, &c.

CHAP. II.

he Baharite dynasty..... Ibeg..... Shajir al Dor..... Bibars..... St. Lewis' death near Tunis..... St. John d'Acre taken by the sultan of Egypt..... The Moguls in Syria.

A. D. 1254. A. H. 652. **W**E now behold Ibeg seated avowedly upon that throne which he had long and ardently coveted. Scarcely had he arrived at this dignity, when he married Shajir al Dor, whose favourite and regent he had formerly been. Success appeared to have woven for him a garland of triumph and peace; but the prospects of the world are often fallacious, and success begets disquietudes, which frequently embitter the sources of enjoyment. Seated upon the height of the Egyptian throne, the first sultan of the Baharite race discovered new ob-

jects which engaged his heart ; and among these was the beautiful and accomplished daughter of the king of Mosul.

What right had Shajir al Dor to complain of his intention to marry another wife ? It was a practice which the religion of Mohammed allowed ; and she had herself been only one of a number of wives, whom the sultan Nojmoddin received into his seraglio. But admiration and power had made her impatient of contradiction, and she could not bear a rival in the affections of her husband, or the admiration of the court. Moreover, she was well aware how much it had been owing to her influence and friendship that Ibeg himself had risen into notice, and acquired the chief command of the state. Void of suspicion, the sultan was going, as usual, to indulge in the bath ; but the revengeful sultaness had prepared his doom ; and assassins, rushing upon him unawares, instantly put him to death.

His body was brought into the palace, and laid at the feet of Shajir al Dor; but the humiliating sight produced in her no emotion of anguish or regret. She made a pretence of offering the empire, and the seat of the sultan, to some lords of the court; but they knew her ambition, and refused in succession the dangerous appointment. These things passed in the interior of the seraglio, during the silence of the night; but the morning proclaimed the horror in the city, and all Cairo was in commotion. That party of the Mamlukes who were called Salehians, as having belonged to Nojmoddin Saleh, placed Nureddin Ali on the throne of his father Ibeg, and they gave him the surname of Al Mansur. Shajir al Dor was ignominiously treated, and justly suffered the punishment of death.

How shall we appreciate power, which is so uncertain, or direct the passions, which are so wild and ungovernable? The attractions and accomplishments of

Shajir al Dor placed her once at the head of the Egyptian government, and every thing was obedient to her command ; but she suffered a diversity of changes, and at last her body was mangled and treated with indignity. The love of power seems to have been the source of her misfortunes ; for when Turan Shaw arrived at Grand Cairo to exercise the office of sultan, she refused to part with the sweet enjoyment of authority ; the fear of neglect, or diminished influence, induced her to murder her husband ; and thus her reputation was blasted, and her life taken away.

A. D. 1257.—About this time, the Moguls were making rapid advances in power and conquest. Their armies, like a torrent, carried every thing before them, and the terror of their name outran their progress. Holagu V, emperor of the Moguls, left Turkistan, in the year of our Lord 1253, and speedily over-ran Persia, Mesopotamia, Syria,

and, in short, all the Saracen possessions in the east, except Yeman and Egypt. When this celebrated general entered Bagdad, A. D. 1258, the caliph Mostasem was put to death, and thereby an end was put to the reign of the Abbassides, which, in a direct, or collateral line, had existed for more than 520 years.

It was in this perilous and important time, that the sultan of Egypt, through his youth and inexperience, was not able to send effectual relief into Syria. In this weak state of the Egyptian government, Cutûz, an artful and ambitious lord, deposed the young sultan, and placed himself at the head of public affairs.

A. D. 1259.—Holagu, having returned from Syria into the east, left Ketboga, one of his generals, to protect the conquests which he had made. Much power and confidence had made this viceroy presumptuous; and Cutûz, the sultan of Egypt, discerning the vices

and pride of Ketboga, defied his threatenings, and prepared for battle. After many previous exertions, a bloody engagement ensued, where Ketboga lost his life; and the Moguls being overthrown, who had hitherto been deemed invincible, Cutûz in triumph entered the capital of Syria.

In the conquests of Holagu, the christians had been treated with special favour, by the friendly interposition of a christian lady, whom Holagu had married; but Cutûz destroyed their churches, and persecuted them with unrelenting fury. Bibars, who had been an active general, had been neglected by the sultan in the distribution of rewards, and the indignant general resolved upon revenge. He imparted his wish to some of the discontented Mamlukes, and when the sultan was engaged in hunting, he was treacherously assailed, and mortally wounded.^c

^c Abulpharaj. p. 349.

A. D. 1260.—Bibars was immediately proclaimed sultan by his followers ; and he had conferred upon him the surname of Daher, with various other descriptive appellations. At Grand Cairo he was received with joy ; but in Syria he had many difficulties to encounter. The people of Damascus being much attached to Sangiar, the governor of that city proclaimed him their lord and sultan. The Moguls returned with vigour and success ; and the armies of the crusade, who were assisted by the eastern invaders, assumed new courage, and bravely defended some of their possessions. The armies of Egypt entered the city of Damascus, pursued Sangiar to Balbec, took him prisoner, and conveyed him to Egypt, where he was treated with lenity and respect.

A. D. 1261.—There appeared at Grand Cairo a person who was named Ahmed, and who had at his command a party of Arabs. He professed to be a son of the caliph Daher Billah, and that he

had fled from Bagdad when Holagu entered and took that city. More than three years had the Mohammedans been without a caliph; and Bibars, with the chief men of Egypt, having heard his pretensions, and investigated his pedigree, received him as the Imam of the Moslem religion. The Mamluke sultans being still but little respected in Egypt, the powerful Bibars was desirous of having his title to Egypt recognised, by the usual solemnities of the Mohammedan faith, and was therefore invested in proper form by the new caliph.

The prejudices of a nation have powerful effects; the people of the realm now held Bibars as sacred, and even in his own mind he enjoyed a complacency and self-gratulation. He bestowed many favours upon the caliph, and sent him, with a considerable escort, toward Bagdad; but he was seized by the Moguls, during his journey, and consigned either to banishment or death.

After this project had misgiven, another pretender laid claim to the high and sacred office of caliph. He too was supported by Bibars, and acknowledged in his pretensions; but he sunk into obscurity, and the caliphs henceforward attracted little notice.

A. D. 1270.—Lewis IX of France, who had done much, and suffered many things, in a former crusade, was again induced to leave Europe, for the assistance of the Holy land. Bibars had shaken the remaining interest of the crusaders in the east; and even Antioch itself had fallen. At the head of 6,000 horse, and 30,000 foot, Lewis directed his march towards the Land of promise; but was diverted from his course, by the delusive prospect of confirming the king of Tunis in the belief and practice of the christian faith. This prince had been assiduously represented as friendly to the religion of Jesus, and Lewis was benevolently inclined to as-

sist him in the progress of his new opinions ; but the whole was a delusive dream, and the French were unexpectedly awaked by the din of arms, and the violence of a hostile reception. Among the fatal events of that day, Lewis himself fell ; and thus the seventh and last crusade was ended, with sorrow and disappointment.^b

Bibars was drawing nigh the end of his career ; and at the time of his death, the empire, over which he ruled, extended from the interior of Africa to the River Euphrates. Though this prince had been a slave, he was nevertheless of noble origin. By the fate of war, he was torn from his parents, who dwelt in the Kipzac, and exposed to sale in the city of Damascus. By the christian writers he is generally called Bendor, from the name of the person to whom he was first sold.

^b Joinville, p. 126 ; and Sanut. lib. iii, part 12, c. 9.

His activity, when a slave, raised him to notice; and when he was sultan of Egypt, he discovered uncommon diligence, both in acquiring possessions and in defending them from danger. He was a man of just and intrepid conduct; he gave much alms to the poor, built caravansaries, endowed hospitals, and established, at Grand Cairo, an extensive seminary of education. He erected a superb bridge over the canal, which passed in the neighbourhood of his capital, and constructed the dome of a celebrated Mikkias. In short, the numerous monuments of his excellence bore a lasting testimony to the wisdom of his government, and the goodness of his heart.^g

A. D. 1277.—Bibars died at Damascus, and his son Barcah, who was then at Grand Cairo, rose in peace to the succession; but, among the emirs of Da-

^g D'Herbelot, titre Bibars; et Abulfed. vol. iv, p. 607, &c.

mascus, there was soon a revolt. The great men about his throne enjoyed all the power and confidence, and those at a distance were jealous and offended. Being in danger of a civil war, his mother interposed her influence, and procured an arrangement for peace. But the interested advisers of the sultan opposed the stipulated terms, and a violent rupture ensued. After some unsuccessful efforts for an accommodation, the sultan retired to Carak, and left the throne of Egypt to his elder brother.^a

A. D. 1279.—This prince was received upon the throne with a profusion of new names. But these descriptive titles, which had hitherto been lavishly bestowed, grew more and more numerous and extravagant, as flattery was cherished, and the stability of the government became more precarious. Considered as mere titles of pomp and pageantry, I

^a Abulpharaj. prolegomonon, p. 10; et D'Herbelot, titre Barcah Chan.

shall not load the page, nor trouble the reader, with the useless enumeration of such frivolous distinctions. But the new sultan was only seven years of age when he was placed upon the throne, and therefore unfit to manage the affairs of government. Kelaun^b was appointed regent ; and, in the exercise of that high office, the young prince was deposed, and the ambitious regent proclaimed sultan.^c

A. D. 1280.—When the news of his elevation reached Damascus, Sancar al Ashcar, who was governor of Syria, was declared sultan of Damascus. To heal the divisions of his kingdom, Kelaun went into Syria, and put to flight the enemies of his government. Al Ashcar fled and joined the Moguls, who were again returning into Syria ; but at length he was restored to the friendship of Ke-

^b Or Calaun.

^c Abulpharaj. prolegomonon, p. 10 ; et D'Herbelot titre Salamesch.

laun, and was again admitted to the station of an emir in the realm. Kelaun sent Balban, and other generals, with an army against the friends of the crusade, and, in the course of a few years, they were stript of all their possessions in the east, except the town and fortress of St. John D'Acre.

His arms had also been successful in Africa; but while he was preparing to attack Acre, he was carried off either by the power of disease, or, as some assert, by the hand of an assassin. Kelaun obtained his kingdom by usurpation, but he governed it with prudence, and was generous, as well as just. He was somewhat advanced in age when he left his native country, and never spoke with fluency the language of Arabia. He set the example in Egypt of cherishing the Circassian slaves with peculiar care, and from that practice important consequences will soon follow.^d

^d Abulpharaj. proleg. p. 10, 11; Abulfed. vol. v, p. 51, &c; et D'Herbelot, titre Calaun.

A. D. 1291.—The late sultan was succeeded by his son Calil, who was not only honoured with many high-sounding titles, but was a great and successful prince. In obedience to the dying command of his father, he resolved to become master of S^c. John D'Acre, and with a powerful army marched into Syria. This city and fortress were able, by their strength, to resist a considerable force, but were not at that time in a favourable state of defence. Frequent applications had been made for assistance; but the pope, with all his resources, was unable to send the necessary relief.

The treasures of the European princes were drained by the former crusades, and the want of success had made them hopeless. The inhabitants of Acre were composed of different nations, who dwelt in distinct departments of the town, and were neither influenced by uniform motives, nor under the direction of one head. In a dissipated country, many of

the crusaders had become intemperate, and, of late, the troops who came from Europe, were chiefly desperate adventurers and the offscourings of society.

The town was violently attacked, and boldly defended; many on both sides fell, and great was the destruction. The crusaders made frequent sallies upon the Egyptian troops; and, in one of these exertions, they almost reached the tent of the sultan; but were warmly received, and driven back with inconceivable loss. As the Musslemans approached, and were likely to become masters of the town, many of the besieged rushed toward the shore; and, by overloading the boats, not a few of them were lost. Those who remained in the town, fought with desperate valour, but were unavoidably overcome. Terms of capitulation were offered, and accepted; but fury, and the want of subordination, violated the agreement. The women of virtue chose rather to die with honour, than live when disgraced; and a whole

convent of nuns mangled and disfigured their bodies, that, in this frightful condition, they might meet the swords, and not the insults, of the fierce Saracens and barbarous Mamlukes.

The few knights and friends of the crusade who escaped from this scene of devastation ran through many perils, and at length found refuge in Cyprus, where the town of Limisso was assigned for their abode. Thus fell S^t. John D'Acre, on the 13th of July, A. D. 1291. It had been exactly one hundred years in the possession of the western nations, and with it the whole land of Palestine was lost to Europe. Thus the blood and treasure, which had been exhausted in the crusades, were spent in vain, and, while the history of those transactions endure, they will exhibit impressive monuments of ambition and misguided zeal.

A. D. 1292.—Calil made great preparations for invading the king of Armenia, and, laying siege to the castle of

of Rûm, he made himself master of that fortress. In the year following, he returned to Grand Cairo, and, amid the amusements of his leisure hours, he was cut off by ambitious conspirators. Bahadur,^e who gave him the first stroke, was hailed sultan by his companions; but, on their way to Grand Cairo, they were met by a band of soldiers who had come out to avenge the death of Calil, and the head of Bahadur was cut off.^f

A.D. 1293.—Naser Mohammed, though but in the ninth year of his age, was proclaimed sultan in the castle of Grand Cairo; and Husamoddin was constituted regent and commander of the militia. Scarcely were these and other arrangements made in the state, when the conduct of some ambitious and aspiring emirs filled the city with alarm and confusion. The young sultan was sent into

^e Or Baidara.

^f D'Herbelot, titre Khalil; et Abulmahason et Sannutus, lib. iii, pt. 12, c. 21; in gest. Dei per Francos.

banishment, and Ketboga set himself down upon the throne. Ladgin, who had promoted his interest, was constituted lieutenant of the kingdom; but this adventurous Mamluke himself was aspiring to the throne, and Ketboga was forced to descend into the walks of common life. But the lords of the realm, being harassed by changes and oppression, hired assassins to cut off Ladgin, and they invited Naser Mohammed to return from his retreat at Carak. Thus the sultan, having remained in banishment for about three years, was restored to his kingdom and honours.

When the ardour of the crusades had abated among the western princes, and when the revenues of their states were much exhausted, an attempt was made to invite the Moguls into Syria, from which they had lately been expelled. Every assistance was offered to get them possession of the country, that they might drive the Turks and Saracens from the Holy land. A deputation was

sent from Rome to Argan, the chan of the Mogul Tartars ; but before the ambassadors arrived, that chief and general was dead. It was not, therefore, till A. D. 1300, that Gazan, the son and successor of Argan, entered into a league with the champions of the crusade. The assistance of the Moguls being also solicited by the governor of Aleppo, the arms of that people were soon triumphant in Syria ; and its capital, Damascus, fell into their power. An attempt was in like manner made to get possession of Jerusalem ; but rebellion at home forced Gazan to repass the Euphrates ; and the sultan of Egypt recovered immediately the whole of his possessions in Syria and Palestine.

A. D. 1301.—The chan of the Moguls, having settled the internal commotions of his kingdom, returned to his favourite project of adding Syria to his other dominions ; but still he preserved an union of operation with the heroes of the crusade, for it would promote his interest

and security to have them placed in Palestine, between him and the formidable armies of Egypt. As the princes of the west had formerly solicited the friendship of the Tartars, so the chan of the Moguls now applied for a crusade to Pope Boniface VIII. But unfortunately, Philip the Fair, king of France, was at enmity with the bishop of Rome, and strenuously opposed whatever schemes the pontiff favoured. The crusade was indeed preached, and powerfully recommended over the whole kingdoms and principalities of the west ; but in those circumstances no assistance could be procured for the christian cause in the east, though the arms of Egypt were triumphant in Syria.^a

A. D. 1304.—Gazan, the chan of the Moguls, died, and Chodabenda, his successor, made peace with the sultan of Egypt ; but Nazer was troubled and perplexed at home. The Mamluke officers

^a D'Herbelot, titre Gazan, et Vertot, tom. ii, liv. 4.

and chiefs were acting with a high hand, and aiming at the supreme direction of the state. He saw their encroachments, he spurned at their insolence, and resolved to strike a blow which would rid him of their presumption. But the keen eye of suspicion detected the design, and the knowledge of his purpose reached the lords of the court. Baktimur, who had a high command in the life guards, betrayed the secret of his master. Selar and Bibars, two of the most obnoxious emirs, strenuously endeavoured to turn the intended blow upon the sultan's own head. But in a country where every thing was suspected, the treason of the emirs in its turn was exposed to view; and the populace, who loved their sovereign, assembled in the streets of Grand Cairo, and supported his cause.

The discontented emirs being struck with awe, shrunk from their purpose; and, having vowed new obedience to the sultan, the people were appeased. But

Naser Mohammed was not in safety; and he was well aware, that the flame of discord and ambition was only smothered, but not extinguished. Under a pretence, therefore, of going in pilgrimage to Mecca, he retired to Carak, and wrote to Grand Cairo, that he had resigned the throne. This unexpected conduct filled the city with consternation, and a petition was sent to solicit his return; but he returned, by the ambassadors, every remaining badge of royalty, and recommended Selar to be his successor in the kingdom.

By an assembly of the state, Selar was invited to receive the crown; but he knew, that the Circassian slaves, who were rising to power, had a strong desire to elevate Bibars; and therefore he declined the proffered honour. Bibars was accordingly elected, and ascended the throne by the name of Modhaffer al Rocknoddin. The new sultan had the shadow, but Selar the reality, of power; and by his counsels, the whole affairs of

government were conducted. Many discontentments run through Syria, as well as Egypt; and scarcely had one year elapsed, when Naser Mohammed, by the persuasion of his friends, returned to the throne of Grand Cairo. At the approach of the legitimate sultan, Bibars fled, but was overtaken, and brought back to the capital. His feelings were sported with, by fallacious hopes of safety; and even when the bow-string was applied, and the miserable sufferer already in the pangs of death, the execution was stopped, and the criminal recovered, for the cruel purpose, of being exposed to additional reproaches, and renewed sufferings.

A. D. 1310.—When Naser Mohammed returned to Grand Cairo, he was received with more joy than the changing temper of the times had been accustomed to exhibit; for he had never ceased to be a favourite with the people. But flattering appearances did not mislead his views; for he knew that there

were secret embers of ambition and revenge, which were ready to burst into a flame. He was well aware, how little the emirs were to be trusted; and of the wounds which they had formerly inflicted, more than the scars were still remaining. With a severity to which necessity had compelled him, he decimated the refractory lords; and the devoted party either suffered death, or were sent into prison.

When the sultan was at rest from his foes, he arranged the affairs of state, and made appointments for the enjoyment of peace; but if private stations are always attended with something to disturb, so the public situations of life produce more numerous and afflicting disquietudes. After all that the sultan had done, there was one person in his dominions, who, though in retirement, excited alarm. Selar was an object of jealousy and fear. Knowing his power, and aware of his ambition, Naser commanded him to appear at Grand Cairo.

The emir was fearful to comply, and his apprehensions were not groundless, for scarcely had he arrived in the city, when he was cast into confinement. There, under the terrors of punishment, he revealed his hidden treasure, and sealed his own disgrace. His shew of wealth was excessive, but it sunk into nothing when compared in value to that which was concealed. In subterraneous apartments of his palace, immense, and incredible quantities of gold, silver, and jewels, were found. Of the treasures which Bibars left, the one half was confiscated for the use of the state, and the other was given to his daughter; but the accumulation of Selar was so enormous, and so apparently the fruit of oppression, that the highest indignation was expressed, and the whole consigned to the public service. As to himself he was kept in close confinement; and, for several days, neither permitted to eat bread nor drink water. In this situa-

tion of distress, he was presented with three dishes covered, and carefully handled, as containing morsels of delicious food. He seized them with all the eagerness of excessive hunger and insupportable thirst; but cruel refinement had prepared an inexpressible disappointment. The first platter contained gold, the second silver, and the third pearls; but these objects of his former affection and trust now embittered his anguish, and added to despair. Those memorials of oppression, which had been wrung from the sweat and hearts blood of many an afflicted brother, were now useless and distressing to the fallen and afflicted Selar; and he died under the agonies of hunger, weakness, and despair.^k

After all, however, the nation was not at peace, and the sultan was exposed to danger; yet he was finally successful, not only in suppressing his domestic

^k Deguignes, tom iv, liv. 21.

foes, but also the Arabs, who had invaded Thebais, and the Moguls, who continued to disturb the peace of Syria. Among the enemies whom Naser had to resist, were the christians of Egypt, and the knights of Cyprus. The turbulence and misguided zeal of the Jacobites and Jews, called forth his vengeance ; and both of them were treated with severity, in the dominions of the sultan.

Thrice had Naser Mohammed left the throne of Egypt ; twice by violence, and once through choice. In the younger part of his life, he had neither means nor inclination to strive against the rising intrigues of the court ; but having returned the third time to the kingdom of his father, he carried to the palace a determined firmness, which never forsook him. He was fully convinced, that the ambitious lords of the realm must be subdued, before any sovereign could reign in peace. His hand of correction, therefore, was justly severe,

and before his intrepid steps, the power and insolence of the emirs fled.

The dangerous and overgrown authority of the lords and barons was felt in Europe, as well as in Egypt; and in both countries there were many efforts to contract its bounds. The crusades, which were begun, and carried on for a different purpose, were yet highly serviceable, in promoting the interests, and establishing the thrones, of the western kingdoms. The treasures of the warlike barons were not only spent in the cause of the Holy land, but many of them mortgaged, or sold their lands and domains. By these transactions the proud lords, who often stood in defiance of their sovereign, were sunk in the scale of influence and power.

In the changing and convulsed state of Egypt, taxes had been imposed, without attention to the interests of the people, and they had been collected with rigour and oppression. The Mamlukes

were provided with certain supplies of food ; and the emirs were supported by large provisions and pecuniary allotments. A strict inquiry being made, by Naser, into the nature, extent, and management, of those public appointments, every fraud or oppression was corrected, and redressed. Thus the reigning sultan secured his own power, by diminishing the strength of his foes, and he supported his throne by the favour and affection of the people.

As the crusades had weakened the strength of the barons in Europe, so the wiser princes of that distracted country provided a counterpoise to the remaining influence of the powerful lords. In England, where genuine liberty first rose, and in the British empire, where it still continues to flourish, the interest of the king was promoted, by the freedom which he conferred on towns, and by the privileges which the knights and burgesses acquired, who assemble

in parliament for the good of the realm.^b

Egypt had long been a neglected country, and though we have found nations depending upon its fertility for food and comfort, yet, for almost a thousand years, from the time when the reign of the Ptolemies ended, till that of the Fatimites began, it was in the degraded state of a province; and every successive governor was more anxious to enrich himself than do good to Egypt. Even when subject to the Fatimites, it was still a forlorn kingdom; for the caliphs of that race were mostly delighted with empty show, while those at the head of affairs proudly oppressed the people; and from the overthrow of that dynasty, Egypt was a continued scene of tumult and change. Thus, by uninterrupted neglect, and a chain of untoward events, the banks of the Nile, and

^b Déguinges, tom. iv, liv. 21; and Millar on the Distinction of ranks, passim.

the plains of the Delta, had, in part, become a barren wilderness and burning sands.

So much diminished were the fruitful parts, and so scanty the returns of the harvest, that an unfavourable season never recurred without producing famine and its desolating effects. But Naser Mohammed cut canals, and, diffusing the waters of the Nile to their ancient extent, converted the unfruitful land into fields of value and districts of abundance. He threw streams of salubrious water into the city of Aleppo; he renewed the canal of Alexandria, which supplied that famous city with water; and he repaired the reservoirs which were destined to receive it. He had a canal cut from Grand Cairo to Siriacûs, whither he often retired; and the banks of this canal were adorned with villas.

He carried on important and extensive public works, at his own expence; and encouraged his subjects to improve their

possessions. As he had reduced the nation to obedience, and hushed its tumults into peace, so, in the prospect of death, he was desirous of preventing jarring claims to the throne of Egypt. As he had raised his dominions to so much dignity and splendour, so he wished to transmit to his posterity the rich and valuable inheritance. With this view, he opened his intention to the grandees of the realm, and they swore allegiance to his eldest son.

A. D. 1341.—Upon the death of his father, therefore, Abubeker was quietly admitted to the throne of Egypt; but there commenced, at that time, a succession of sultans, which was so rapid, that twelve of them, who were all sons, or grandsons of Naser Mohammed, scarcely extended their reign to forty-one years. If I were to give, in detail, an account of the transactions which happened while each of them was on the throne, it would be a tiresome repetition of similar events, and disgraceful schemes.

In Egypt there was treason, in Syria rebellion ; and every powerful emir was attempting to raise himself by commotions in the state. During this period of tumult and change, there were only two circumstances which deserve particular notice; the one was an extensively prevailing pestilence, and the other an important invasion of Egypt.

A. D. 1348.—At Grand Cairo, and throughout the whole country, there was a most destructive visitation of the plague, which also pervaded Asia, and Europe ; and wherever it appeared its effects were dreadful. So destructive was its progress, that the nations which it entered were threatened with desolation. The mourning was so universal, and sorrows followed so close one upon another, that the survivors wept, till the very fountain of their tears became dry. Yet all these terrors and desolations did not rectify the abuses which prevailed in the afflicted kingdoms, nor did they abate the mad ambition of the

Egyptian emirs. Power was still pursued, at the expence of integrity, order, and peace.

It has already been observed, that, upon the loss of S^t. John d'Acre, the knights of the religious orders found a retreat at Limisso ; but they were unhappy in that state of dependence, and were oppressed by the heavy imposts of the king of Cyprus. It has appeared, in the course of our remarks, that the Knight Hospitallers and those of the Temple were frequently at variance between themselves; and instead of residing in Cyprus, or seeking another habitation in the east, the Templars departed for Europe, and dispersed themselves among the possessions, which, as a body of people, they had acquired. But the knights of the hospital of S^t. John formed a design of seizing Rhodes, and making a settlement in that island.

To assist in so important and brilliant an enterprise, many supplies of ships and warriors arrived from the

west; and with much heroism, against much opposition, and among innumerable difficulties, the Hospitallers became masters of the island, and were then denominated knights of Rhodes. Situated in the Mediterranean, between Egypt and Asia Minor, the knights of Rhodes and the king of Cyprus were exposed to hostile invasions, from the Ottoman Turks, and the Mamlukes of Cairo. The Ottomans were rapidly increasing in power, and were aiming, by distant schemes, at the overthrow of the Egyptian government; but it was necessary, as a previous step, to subdue the intervening isles of the Mediterranean sea.

The sultans of Egypt were not only employed among their possessions in Syria, but, to protect themselves from the encroachments of the Ottoman Turks, and to be delivered from the terrors of the crusade, they too were desirous of obtaining Cyprus and Rhodes. Frequently galled by attacks of their enemies, on each side, the christians of

Cyprus and Rhodes defended themselves with vigour, and made frequent exertions to invade their foes.

A. D. 1365.—Having fitted out a considerable fleet, Lusignan, king of Cyprus, and Raymond Berenger, grand-master of Rhodes, bent their course toward Egypt, and arrived in safety in the old port of Alexandria. Instantly they laid siege to the city, and the people of Alexandria defended it with vigour. Against the besiegers they employed the most powerful engines of war, and poured upon those who attempted to scale the walls boiling oil and burning fluids, so that many of them, to quench the flames, were obliged to plunge into the water; but the christians entered the town, and they entered it with revenge. The alarm of this progress reached Grand Cairo, and Shaban, the grandson of Naser Mohammed, who was then upon the throne, sent immediate relief to Alexandria, and he went himself to the point of danger. Upon the appearance of so formidable

a force, the christians retired, and arrived in a few days at Cyprus and Rhodes.

Ilboga, who was regent of Egypt, immediately employed the most vigorous measures for procuring timber from the woods of Syria, not only to replace the ships which the christians had burned at Alexandria, but also for increasing the fleets of his country to a formidable extent. But, in the meantime, the king of Cyprus, and the grand-master of Rhodes, being still in a state of preparation for war, the government of Egypt agreed to terms of peace, which the christians could not have expected, if the kingdom of Egypt had not been weak and tottering, by the never-ceasing broils of the factious and discontented emirs.

But the terms which were granted in a time of alarm were refused to be ratified; and the christians directed their ships and their arms toward Syria. The christians got possession of Tripoli, Laodicea, and other places of importance,

and struck terror into the Egyptians. But not receiving supplies from Europe, Lusignan could not retain his conquests; and as both parties were embarrassed in their situation, a peace was concluded between the sultan of Egypt and the christians of Cyprus and Rhodes. But the internal divisions which had long distracted Egypt, had now risen to their greatest height, and one party must be victorious.^a

The Ayubite princes, during their reign, surrounded themselves with an increasing body of slaves, till the sultans of that dynasty not only lost all authority, but were finally deprived of the kingdom. The Baharite Mamlukes, having seized upon the government, constituted a sultan from among themselves, and he too found it necessary to support his throne by slaves and a militia, who were attached to his interest. The adherents of the Ayubite dynasty were

^a M. Vertot, tom. ii, liv. 4.

enraged at the usurpation of the Baharites ; and while the sultans of that line, by promises and rewards, drew to their party as many of the militia as possible, they, at the same time, bought and put into their service numerous bodies of Circassian slaves.

Every succeeding sultan was obliged to fortify himself in a similar manner ; and thus the Circassian forces were continually increasing. At length they not only balanced the power of the Baharite militia, but became masters of the government. The throne, which had been elective since the beginning of the Mam-luke dynasty, was now entirely at the disposal of Circassian chiefs, who had acquired influence in the army, and authority in the state. Detesting the reign of the Baharites, they aimed at electing a sultan among themselves ; but so many were there secretly aspiring to that station, that it was found difficult to make a choice.

In the reign of Hagi, grandson of

Naser Mohammed, Barcok, a Circassian chief, employing in his own behalf that power which he possessed as regent of the kingdom, and generalissimo of the forces, deposed the sultan, who was but a child, and had himself elected to the throne of Egypt. The Baharites, who had possessed the throne of Egypt for about 128 years, now sunk into obscurity, and a new race of elective sultans were to direct the affairs of that weak and distracted country.^b

^b D'Herbelot, titre Mamlouk, Deguignes, tom. v, liv. 24; Abulpharaj. proleg. p. 12, &c.

CHAP. III.

The Borgite dynasty. . . . Barcok. . . . Many changes upon the Egyptian throne. . . . Tamerlane. . . . Bajazet. . . . His death. . . The order of Knight Templars abolished. . . Tamerlane's death. . . . Frequent changes in Egypt. . Constantinople taken by the Turks. . . . Cyprus. . . . Bajazet II. . . . Dispute with his brother Zezim. . . . The fall of the Borgite dynasty.

A. H. 784. **T**HE Circassians were a race
 A. D. 1382. of Tartars, who, at an early period, left their native region in the east, and took up their abode in Siberia, in the neighbourhood of the lake, or, as it is sometimes called, the sea of Baikal. They are the same people who are occasionally denominated Kerkes or Kerges.

No sooner was Barcok seated upon the throne of Egypt, than a host of enemies

poured forth from every part of the empire. Envy was even apparent among the Circassian emirs; but his chief danger lay among the remaining powerful lords of the Baharite dynasty. To comprehend the origin of the political changes and extensive revolutions which happened in the Mamluke dynasties, it must be understood, that every emir of the realm had a certain number of slaves and Mamluke soldiers, whom he had purchased, or otherwise procured; that these slaves were totally at his command, and that in proportion to their number, so was his strength. Thus a powerful emir, in a state of political distraction, dared occasionally to oppose the sultan, and, drawing others into his plans, the subjects of the same government were often at warfare one with another. Thus too, the sultans were sometimes deposed, and an ambitious emir raised to the seat of danger and precarious power.

Ilboga and Mantash, with other discontented lords of the empire, excited com-

motions, and instantly rebelled against Barcock the sultan. Far from the centre of government, Syria, as usual, was the principal seat of rebellion; even the presence of the sultan himself could not stem the torrent, which flowed with irresistible force, to the very palace of Barcock, and swept him from the place of power.^c

A. D. 1389.—Hagi was replaced upon the throne, and Ilboga was invested with the powers of commander in chief of the armies, and regent of the kingdom; but this high station exposed him to envy, and the conduct he pursued was not marked with prudence. To ingratiate himself with the army, and establish his authority among the people, the late sultan had been lavish in presents, and generous in remitting imports and reducing taxes. But Ilboga was partial to his friends, severe to-

^c D'Herbelot, titre Barcock; et Deguignes, tom. v, liv. 22^e

wards the people, and jealous of his rivals.

In accomplishing the revolution by which Barcok was dethroned, Mantash had borne a considerable part; but, in the day of power, the triumphant Ilboga had neglected to reward him. Secret displeasure quickly appeared in acts of jealousy, and grew into hatred, till it burst forth in determined opposition and resistance. By acts of liberality, Mantash gained upon the populace, and was supported by the friends of Barcok.

Ilboga being overcome in battle, was conducted by his enemies to Alexandria, and cast into prison. Hagi appears to have had little sway, and his power was crushed with the authority of the regent. Mantash had promised the partisans of Barcok liberty to their chief, and many advantages for themselves; but, in the season of success, he too disregarded the obvious claims of many who supported him. In the violence of

power, he issued orders for the murder of Barcok ; but the degraded sultan escaped from prison, fled to Carak, and was surrounded by powerful friends.

Seeing the danger to which he was exposed, Ilboga made vigorous preparations to pursue Barcok, and crush his regenerating power. To procure money, he was guilty of extortion, and laid severe imposts upon both christians and Jews. But the partisans of Barcok, daily increasing in strength, a decisive battle routed the army of Hagi, disappointed the hopes of Mantash, and Barcok was again placed on the throne of Egypt.

A. D. 1390.—He began his new career with acts of friendship and wise regulations ; but Syria was still the theatre of disorder and war. Mantash retained possession of Damascus, and seized Balbeck, together with various places of strength and importance. He was opposed by the armies and friends of the reigning sultan ; but the aspect and tendency of affairs in Syria induced Barcok to visit

the theatre of war in person. In the meantime, Mantash made his escape, and, without being able to strike an important blow, the sultan returned to Grand Cairo.

Mantash, supported by the Turks and their adherents, appeared again on the field of public conflict, but was seized and put in safe custody by the governor of Aleppo. Finding himself in the midst of his enemies, knowing his hopes were blasted, and seeing disgrace inevitable, he attempted to finish, by violence, a life which was no longer supportable; but his efforts were prevented, and he died amid the severities of public punishment.

Scarcely had Barcok been delivered from the intrusions of Mantash, when a more formidable foe threatened his dominions in Syria. Tamerlane, who founded a new empire of Moguls, had possessed himself of Persia, and many of the provinces which formerly belong-

ed to the empire of the caliphs, and had driven from Bagdad, Ahmed the son of Avis, the chan of the Ilchanians. This fugitive prince took refuge in Aleppo, and passed from that situation to enjoy the more immediate protection of Barcok in Egypt. The sultan received him with the highest marks of respect; but the joys of friendship were soon interrupted by a threatening message from the sultan of the Moguls.

Tamerlane had entered Syria, and been successful in extending his empire. Enraged at Barcok for protecting Ahmed, and desirous of possessing Syria as a province, this victorious prince transmitted a hostile message to the sultan of Egypt. An answer of defiance was returned, and Barcok marched toward Damascus for the defence of his kingdom. Owing to the general situation of his affairs, Tamerlane retired at the approach of the sultan of Egypt. A favourable opportunity thus presenting itself, Ahmed was restored to the government of

Bagdad, and he gratefully acknowledged himself a vassal of Barcok.

A. D. 1394.—The multiplied successes of Tamerlane had raised a general alarm, and various independant princes sought protection from the terror of his arms. While Tamerlane, or the great chan of Tartary, as he has been called, was enlarging his borders toward Syria and the Euphrates, the Ottoman Turks were spreading terror upon both sides of the Hellespont, and carried their arms almost to the gates of Constantinople. Bajazet, who was at the head of the Ottoman affairs, and was the avowed rival of Tamerlane, was desirous of establishing his authority by the apparent influence of a legal sanction.

For this purpose he sent an embassy to the sultan of Egypt, in order to be recognized as sultan of Rûm^a by the ca-

^a Thus he meant to be a successor to the emperors of Rome, for their power was almost extinguished, and scarcely extended beyond the walls of Constantinople.

liph, who still resided at the court of Grand Cairo. He obtained the title which was so anxiously desired ; but no dignity was added to his name nor government, for unbounded ambition guided his steps, and savage cruelty disgraced his deeds.

Tamerlane directed his arms toward India ; the government of Syria enjoyed repose, and Barcok returned to Egypt, where he spent the rest of his days in peace. At the approach of death, having summoned together the caliph and grandees of state, he recommended to the succession his son Pharage, and died in the sixtieth year of his age. Barcok was generous and humane, governed his people with mildness, and left memorial of his bountiful conduct. He was liberal to the poor, generous to the learned, and, in an ample manner, endowed a superb college which he built at Grand Cairo.^b

^b D'Herbelot, titre Barcok, Bajazid, et Timur ; et Deguignes, tom. v, liv. 22 ; et Abulpharaj. proleg. p. 19, 20.

A. D. 1399.—The son of Barcok was but ten years of age when he ascended the throne, and he adopted the titles of Naser Zenoddin Abulsaadat. Ifmish was constituted regent of the kingdom, and his elevation to that station appears to have been the signal for divisions and revolt. Tanam raised the standard of rebellion at Damascus, and all Syria was in commotion. Sudûn and Jashbak were turbulent at Grand Cairo, and the flames of civil war, descending toward Alexandria, changed their course, ravaged the valley of the Nile, and diffused themselves over the higher and less interesting parts of Egypt. Ifmish, being stripped of the regency, fled to Damascus, and took refuge with Tanam, and the emir Bibars took an active part at home in favour of the sultan.^c

Naser Pharage raised an army in Egypt, and marched towards Syria to quell the rebellion; but Tanam, with

^c M. Deguignes, tom. iv, liv. 22, titre Pharage.

well-appointed and formidable forces, met him at Gaza. The rebels were overthrown, the chief of them taken prisoners, and many of them, as well as their leader himself, were put to death. The strength of the factious was also broken in Egypt; but Syria still presented scenes of anxiety. Ahmed, the sultan of Bagdad, had again been driven from his kingdom, and, at the head of a considerable army, unexpectedly approached the walls of Aleppo. He applied to Timurtash, the governor of that city, and solicited permission to pass into Syria.

But seven thousand men in arms, and these too with doubtful views, could not be rashly received, nor wisely trusted. Ahmed persisted in his purpose, the faithful governor resisted the attempt, and, in a bloody battle, the intruding forces were overthrown. Cara Joseph, the lord of Taurus, was also along with Ahmed, and as both of them had experienced the protection of Egypt, they wrote after this defeat to the court

of Grand Cairo, professing their attachment to the interests of the sultan, and casting the whole blame upon the conduct of Timurtash. But their pretensions were not respected; their rashness was condemned, and a command given that they should be sent in irons to the court of Egypt.

When Tamerlane returned from India, he found that Bajazet had been extending his conquests, and preparing to overthrow the chan of Tartary. Between men of such unbounded ambition, no friendship could exist, and in hearts so totally destitute of humanity, nothing but cruelty and revenge could abide. They looked upon each other with determined malice, they watched one another's steps with the most rancorous jealousy, and each of them was determined to overthrow his rival.

Tamerlane's strides were rapid, and his conduct was as cruel as the severity of his countenance seemed to imply. Having received a taunting answer from

Bajazet, he declared war against that rival, and laid siege to Sivas, or Sebaste, a city of Cappadocia. It was resolutely defended by Ortogules, a son of Bajazet; but it fell before the power of the haughty Tartar, and the city was overthrown by a total destruction. Mercy was excluded from the undistinguishing carnage, and, by the positive orders of Tamerlane, the son of Bajazet was beheaded, that his father's heart might be wrung with sorrow.

It was probably upon this impressive and afflicting event, that Bajazet applied for succour from Naser Phorage the sultan of Egypt. When he was sanctioned in his government by the caliph at Grand Cairo, he professed to be an ally of Egypt; but, in the pursuit of power, he violated the territory which belonged to that country in Syria, and therefore the sultan denied his claim to countenance or support. Perhaps there was another, though an unacknowledged reason, which induced the Egyptian court

to leave Bajazet without assistance. The chan of Tartary was brandishing his scimitar on the borders of Syria, and the terror of his power had even entered the palaces of Egypt. On this account, the councils of that country neither wished to provoke his vengeance, nor employ those forces in the cause of Bajazet, which might soon be necessary to defend themselves.

At the time of this refusal, the sultan Bajazet was in siege before the city of Constantinople, and lying in wait to destroy the expiring strength of the Roman empire. But, in a state of distraction for the loss of his son, and mad with the mingled emotions of political jealousy and revenge, he hastened to meet Tamerlane, though his strength was not collected, nor the necessary precautions observed. He met the army of Tamerlane near Ancyra, or Angora, the capital of Galatia, and they joined battle at the foot of Mount Stella, on

the very plain where Pompey vanquished Mithridates.

The battle was as obstinate, and the exertions as terrible, as a struggle for power, and the most desperate sallies of mutual hatred, could possibly produce. As if the Turks had felt every emotion of their injured and ambitious prince, they moved with irresistible strength, and the Tartar army was obliged to give way. But the decisive issue was otherwise directed; the troops of Tamerlane were rallied; some Tartar bands, who fought with Bajazet, perfidiously deserted his standard; the Turks were overpowered, and Bajazet was taken prisoner.

The treatment which he received from Tamerlane has been stated in honourable or vindictive terms, according to the information, views, and prejudices, of different historians. By some it has been asserted, that he was graciously received, and indulged with every tenderness which his rank demanded, and

his situation could permit ; while others affirm, that he was exposed to every insult, and languished in an iron cage, till accident furnished him with the long-wished for means of extinguishing life.²

A. D. 1400.—Having gained so great a triumph, in the defeat and death of Bajazet, and having over-run a considerable tract of the Saracen's possessions in Syria, Tamerlane directed his views toward a wider range of influence, and a greater extent of power. He proposed to ravage the south of Europe ; to cross into Africa, at the straits of Gibraltar ; and to continue his triumphant course through Egypt and Syria, till he should accomplish the victorious circuit, by arriving, with accumulated honours, within the boundaries of his original empire. But there was one power which he durst not leave unsubdued, and if it were not brought into subjection, his

² Vertot, tom. ii, liv. 5.

views of such extensive conquests must be abandoned.

This obstruction to his vast projects was found in the powerful settlements of the knights of Rhodes. They had extended their conquests and influence over many neighbouring islands in the Mediterranean sea and Archipelago, had increased their power to a considerable pitch, and not only enjoyed the benefits of extensive commerce, but their arms were formidable by sea. While they defended the king of Cyprus from the attempts of the Saracens, the Turks, and the Tartars, they were maintaining and establishing their own security; for if any of those powerful nations should gain possession of Cyprus, the christians of Rhodes must be exposed to danger and imminent peril.

The sources of that increased power, to which the knights had arrived, are to be found in their own prowess, the favourable situation of their residence, and the vast acquisition of riches which

they derived from the forfeited possessions of the Knight Templars. Soon after the christians were driven from the Holy land, the knights of the temple we know retired into Europe, and while they had abandoned the cause of the crusades, they lived in ease and idleness upon those ample donations of land, and other revenues, which zeal, superstition, and piety, had allotted for the defence of the holy sepulchre.

In this state of indolent enjoyment, they excited envy, and exposed themselves to hatred. They had inlisted under the banners of a cause which implied pious and devout feelings; and in the bosom of many knights, the pure flame of devotion was kindled. But independent of pious views, the warfare of the crusades became a fashionable pursuit; and it was in Palestine where the field of glory invited the champions.

Among the numerous knights who fought in the cause of the crusade, many

wielded the buckler and the spear, who had no higher objects than success in war, and renown in the field. In a licentious age, and among scenes of luxury, habits of dissipation must have been acquired, which, in times of idleness and enjoyment, might break forth in acts of impurity and disgrace.

The Knight Templars were charged with many crimes, and accused of base and unnatural pursuits. Their greatest enemy was Philip the Fair, king of France; and his conduct was not without suspicion of being influenced by revenge, or directed by a desire of reaping advantage from their downfall. But whatever was the cause or joint motives of action, so powerful an accuser did not challenge, nor present charges in vain. The knights were cast into prison, exposed to torture, and many of them put to death.

At length a numerous assembly was appointed to meet at Vienne, in the province of Dauphiny, with full powers

to examine the matter at issue, and to pass a final sentence. The meeting was called by the pope, and attended by a vast concourse of princes and clergy. The king of France appeared in person, and there, upon the 22^d of May A. D. 1312, the order of Knight Templars was solemnly dissolved, and prohibited for ever to be re-established.

Their wealth, which consisted in money, was forfeited to the princes of their respective dominions; the commandaries^b in Spain were given to the govern-

^b In the early state of their funds, a knight was appointed to superintend the revenues of a certain district, and after paying the necessary expences, to remit the balance for the support of the knights in the Holy land. But these discretionary powers were sometimes abused, and therefore it was stipulated, that every superintending knight should be bound to pay annually into the public funds a specified sum for the benefit of the crusades. In the commission and warrant, which was given to the superintendant, the powers were expressed in the Latin language, and using the word *commendamus*, as communicating an important trust, the district thus given in charge was denominated a commandary, and the person who acted was called the commander. The prior had the chief direction, and the returns were called responsions.

ments of the various provinces, for defending the christians against the Moors; and the Teutonic knights had also a proportionable share of the spoils. But the greatest part of the property, in houses and lands, was adjudged to the knights of Rhodes, and constituted the property of that religious order. It was thus that they were enabled to place themselves in so favourable a posture of defence, and command the respect of nations.

But whatever were the crimes and misdemeanours of the knights of the Temple, we cannot but review their treatment with pity and indignation. We feel for the cruelties which they suffered, and we reprobate the means which were pursued to bring them to punishment. In so numerous a body of people, many crimes must have been committed, and while the more honest and sincere confessed the general corruption, the recording secretaries appear to have vitiated the statements, and to have added many criminating confes-

sions, which the persons themselves had never emitted. This could be the more easily accomplished, as in those days of ignorance many persons of rank could scarcely read, and even some of the dignified clergy had not learned to write. The grand master of the Templars, and other persons of distinction belonging to that order, were shocked at the declarations, which were certified as having been made by them; and with their dying breath they disavowed the assertions, and reprobated the deceit.

Tamerlane would have attempted the isle of Rhodes, but he knew how well it was fortified, and was aware that the principal strength of the knights was there concentrated. Cyprus too was watched by them with a jealous care; and therefore he resolved to attack them in the town of Smyrna. Though it had been placed in a favourable state of defence, and was keenly protected by the valorous knights; yet, as it was built upon the shore of the main land,

Tamerlane had easy access to its walls, and his formidable troops laid it in ashes. How much the panic which was now struck might have paved the way for subduing the knights of Rhodes, the boldness of conjecture cannot offer an idea. But a powerful prince, whom Tamerlane had insulted, in some of his eastern or Indian expeditions, had become formidable by renewed strength, and was laying waste the kingdom of Persia. Thither he directed his course, with the uplifted hand of vengeance; but he met with so warm a reception, and was so much exhausted, by long and continued scenes of warfare, that he entered into terms of agreement with his enemy, and, retiring from the toils of active life, he withdrew to Samarchand, and there, in a few years, he ended his days.^b

The miseries which Tamerlane had inflicted upon Syria, in the taking of

^b D'Herbelot, titre Timur; et Vertot, tom. ii, liv. 6.

Aleppo, in pillaging Damascus, and the far-extended destruction of his arms, were not sufficient to heal the internal divisions of Egypt, nor to put the least check upon the interested and ambitious views of the contending and powerful emirs. The distractions continued to rage, till, in the year of our Lord 1405, the sultan Phorage retired from the plots and dangers of his court, and his brother Abdolaziz was appointed to reign in his stead. But the reign of the new sultan was little more than two months, when Phorage left the place of his concealment, and was placed again upon the throne of Egypt.

Seven years ensued of uninterrupted confusion, where nothing was conspicuous but the exertions of cunning, perfidy, and ambition; till A. D. 1412, when the sultan was murdered in the castle of Damascus, and the caliph Mostain declared to be his successor. But his elevation to the throne of Egypt appears to have been only a temporizing

measure, till the exhausted parties could recognise their adherents, know the extent of their strength, and determine what measures to adopt. Sheik Mohammed, being both powerful and dexterous, insinuated himself into the councils of Mostain, usurped the authority, and had himself proclaimed sultan.^f

A. D. 1412.—The ascension of this sheik to the dignity of Sultan does not appear to have been attended with many commotions in Egypt; but the province of Syria was still the centre of discontentment and rebellion. Nevruz, who had long been a powerful rival, was indignant at the elevation of the Sheik Mohammed, and, having raised a numerous army, resisted his power, but was at length vanquished and put to death.

Cara Joseph, the lord of Tauris, had now obtained the sovereignty of Bag-

^f Abulpharaj. proleg. p. 21; et Deguignes, tom. iv, liv. 22.

dad ; and having made peace with Shahrok, the son of Tamerlane, had an opportunity, and was not without the inclination, of invading Syria. In the meantime, the powerful lords of that country were still in commotion, and some of them retired to the sultan of Bagdad. Having spent a life of continual anxiety and alarm, Mohammed died, after he had sat upon the throne of Egypt little more than eight years.

Though he was held in a constant scene of conflict, by the violence and ambition of the dissatisfied emirs, yet he was much beloved by the general body of the people. He was benevolent and pious ; and, during a famine, which raged while he was upon the throne, he adopted the most engaging measures, for alleviating the affliction, and soothing the minds of the people. He encouraged men of science, promoted the general interests of the nation, and his death was much and justly lamented.

A. D. 1421.—The son of the late sultan was declared to be his successor, though he had not completed the second year of his age. Cara Joseph had finished his career by death, towards the latter end of the former reign; but the nation was not at peace; and the infancy of the new sultan afforded an opportunity for plots and attempts of ambition. It was at length agreed that Daher should be regent of the kingdom; but he employed the powers which that appointment conferred to seize upon the kingdom for himself.

While at Damascus, he married the mother of the young sultan, and was acknowledged as sovereign of Egypt. Ahmed, the deposed sultan, together with his brother Ibrahim, was shut up in the castle of Grand Cairo; and there they were detained till death released them from imprisonment and sorrow. Daher had scarcely enjoyed his elevation and power for the space of three months, when he yielded to the stroke of death,

and Mohammed his son reigned in his stead. This youth was but ten years of age; and during his reign of a few months, the same scenes of violence and blood were continued. During these conflicts, the emir Barsebai deposed the sultan, and ascended the throne of Egypt.^o

A. D. 1422.—Abulnasar Seifoddin Barsebai was exposed to resistance and tumults, similar to those which for a long period had continually distracted the government of Egypt. The terror of the Tartar arms vanished at the death of Tamerlane. The Turks, though still increasing in power, were not so formidable, since Bajazet I. was overthrown; and therefore Barsebai, to employ his seditious emirs, directed the full force of his army towards the christian settlements in the isles of the Mediterranean sea.

^o Abulpharaj. proleg. p. 22, 23; et Deguignes, tom. iv. liv, 22.

He was the more excited to this course of conduct, because those christians had broken the treaty which had been made between them and some of his predecessors; and, in their hostile incursions, not only pillaged the coast of Syria, but approached the harbours of Alexandria, and entered the Delta.

He fitted out a fleet, which was to sail toward Tripoli, and had orders to harass the ships and squadrons of the christians. The taking of Cyprus was the main object which the Saracens had in view; for the king of that island was less powerful than the knights of Rhodes; and it has been observed, that the possession of Cyprus would give the Egyptian government a favourable opportunity of watching the knights of Rhodes, and might finally enable them to destroy their power. The fleet of the Saracens having arrived at Cyprus, the soldiers and sailors ravaged a considerable part of the island; and though they

were obliged to retire, yet they returned home loaded with booty.

In the following year he fitted out another fleet, in the ports of Alexandria and Damietta; but by this time the knights of Rhodes were alarmed for their own safety, and had their ships abroad in the Mediterranean sea, to watch the motions of the Saracen fleets. But, notwithstanding these measures of precaution, the Saracens landed at Limisso, possessed themselves of Nicosia, and plundered the rich commandary which the knights had in the island of Cyprus. The consequences of this success were fatal to the independence of the island; and the king himself was conducted to Grand Cairo, seated upon a mule, and bound in chains. A high ransom was demanded for his liberty; but at length the sultan agreed to take 200,000 pieces of gold, and a yearly tribute of 20,000. Thus peace was restored; but security could not be enjoyed, for the christians knew

their danger, and the vigilant knights prepared for war, though they cultivated peace.

In the treaty which formerly subsisted between the Saracens and knights, a variety of arrangements were made for the safety of the christians in the dominions of Egypt, and for the benefit of trade in the ports of that kingdom. Among other covenants, it was stipulated, that there should be free access to the sepulchre at Jerusalem, and that the christian pilgrims should receive protection and pay no tribute. But in the late war with the christian powers, all these agreements were naturally broken ; and it would appear that the christians of Ethiopia had suffered by the change.

Travelling in pilgrimage to Jerusalem, through the Egyptian territories, without knowing of the misunderstanding and war, some of them had been exposed to unexpected and cruel treatment. In revenge for what his subjects

had suffered, the emperor of Ethiopia commanded many of the Musslemans in his dominions to be punished, and some of them to suffer death. The sultan Barsebai threatened retaliation upon the patriarch and christians of Egypt; but his wrath was appeased, and no sorrows were inflicted. Being a true hero, and possessing a great mind, his conduct was adorned with the graces of humility.

The subjects of the Egyptian empire had long been accustomed, in acts of obeisance, to prostrate themselves on the ground; but, generously prohibiting this slavish act of submission, he commanded them only to kiss his hand. Having struggled for more than sixteen years upon the throne of a turbulent state, he resigned himself without reluctance to the peace of the grave.^c

The kingdom of Egypt had now be-

^c Abulpharaj. proleg. p. 23; D'Herbelot, titre Barsebai; Vertot, tom. ii, liv. 6.

come so tumultuary, and the power of the individual emirs so nearly balanced, that the revolutions were frequent, and many of their reigns so short, that no important transactions could be planned, or executed, in the space of their duration. From the period at which we have now arrived, till the conclusion of the Circassian dynasty, there was a succession of fifteen or sixteen sultans. And although the duration of their united reigns amounted only to eighty years, five of them comprehended about seventy-four, and out of those five, one prince reigned fifteen and another twenty-nine years. It is therefore apparent, that a particular attention to the respective governments of some of those princes would be little more than to mention their elevation, to observe a few turbulent movements, and then to pronounce their downfall. I shall, on this account, confine my remarks to the reign of those princes which continued at least for a few years. The transac-

tions which might be begun, or partly carried on, in any of the more fugitive reigns, will be easily and naturally explained, in discussing the pursuits and engagements of the more permanent and undisturbed governments.

A. D. 1438.—After a short reign of three months, which Jemaloddin enjoyed, immediately after the death of Barsebai, Abusaid Jacmac was constituted sultan of Egypt. In his reign a bold attempt was made to seize upon the island of Rhodes, and subdue the power of the christian knights. On both sides a considerable armament was prepared, and deep designs were counteracted by consummate skill and dexterous valour. The Saracens got footing in some small islands in the Mediterranean sea; but their attempt upon Rhodes was ineffectual, and their retreat was honourable to the christian warriors.

The forces of Egypt being recruited, landed upon the island of Rhodes, marched to the capital, and laid

siege to the city : but after spending forty days in that situation of anxiety and danger, they were compelled to depart from the island. Yet still the christian knights were not at ease ; they were apprehensive of the Turks, who were threatening them from Rûm and the shores of the Bosphorus. They were convinced, that the repeated defeats which the Borgite armies had experienced, would but concentrate their distracted power, and bring them back with increased strength and renovated vigour.

The christian princes of Europe were engaged in the madness of dissensions and war ; and though their zeal had continued to burn in behalf of the Holy land, yet their situation was such as precluded the possibility of granting effectual aid. In these circumstances of danger, and without the expectation of foreign assistance, the knights of Rhodes were desirous of peace with the sultan of Egypt. That point was obtained by

the influence of James Cœur, a merchant of France, who traded with every commercial nation, and who was well known, and much respected in the ports of Egypt.^d

A. D. 1453.—The sultan Jacmac died, and Almansur Othman was declared his successor ; but, having reigned only a few weeks, he was deposed from the office, and Abulnaser Inal was placed on the throne.

It was at the advanced age and infirm period of eighty, that Inal began to sway the sceptre. He was so illiterate that he could not prefix his signature to the letters of state ; and when the caliph Caim Bamrillah, with some of his companions, smiled at his ignorance, they were charged with a conspiracy, and the caliph was removed to Alexandria. It was about the commencement of this sultan's reign, upon the 29th of May, A. D. 1453, that Constantinople

^d Abulpharaj. proleg. p. 24 ; et Vertot, tom. ii, liv. 6.

was taken by Mohammed II, the sultan of the Turks.

While Inal was reigning in Egypt, the affairs of Cyprus excited a considerable interest. John de Lusignan, the last king of that island, had no lawful child but one daughter. She was first married to a Portuguese nobleman, and, after his death, to Lewis, son of the duke of Savoy: but her illegitimate brother, James, gave in pretensions to the throne of Cyprus. The princess Charlotte, and wife of Lewis, was supported by the knights of Rhodes, who had long protected the family of Lusignan.

But James solicited, and obtained, the friendship of Mohammed II, and of Inal the sultan of Egypt. The Egyptian court being at peace with the knights, and jealous of the increasing power of the Turks, was disposed to resist the solicitations of the pretender, and support the more legitimate claim of the lawful daughter of Lusignan; but Mo-

hammed, from his exalted seat in Constantinople, pled the cause of James at Grand Cairo, and the sultan of Egypt was unwilling to incur his displeasure. The pretender strengthened his interest by marrying Catherine Cornaro, a Venetian lady of distinction ; and the merchants of that republic, who had strong commercial connections with the people of Egypt, extended his influence at the court of Cairo.

In this temper of mind, the ambassador of the knights was illegally detained by the sultan of Egypt ; and the ships of the order were seized in the ports. By way of reprisal, some Venetian gallies were taken by the ships of Rhodes ; and the valuable cargoes, which belonged to the sultan of Egypt, were applied to the use and benefit of the knights. The Venetian sailors were allowed to depart with their vessels ; but those who were Egyptian subjects were detained as slaves. This transaction gave such deep offence, that Rhodes

was in danger, both from Venice and Egypt; but by the prudence of the grand-master, James de Milly, the storm was averted, and peace restored.^d

A. D. 1461.—Inal paid the debt of nature; and Abulphata Ahmed reigned only a few months, and then yielded to the power of Abusaid Coshcadam, who was proclaimed sultan. He was not a Circassian, but was of Greek extraction, and had been brought a slave from the country of Rûm. He reigned six years and six months; and by his prudent and pacific conduct, the nation was blessed with an uncommon degree of repose.

Mohammed II, who reigned at that time over the Turks, had fixed his residence at Constantinople; and spreading his conquest in countries which were more connected with that situation, he had no opportunity of disturbing the possessions and government of Egypt;

^d Abulpharaj. proleg. p. 24, 25; D'Herbelot, titre Inal; and Vertot, tom. iii, liv. 7.

and Coshcadam was in a state of peace with the knights of Rhodes.

Upon the death of James de Lusignan, which was occasioned by poison, the Venetians seized the sovereignty of Cyprus, without regarding the claims of the princess Charlotte; and, having a commercial treaty with Egypt, that part of the Mediterranean was wholly at peace. The sultan of Egypt finished his course in the possession of general esteem; and his successors, Balbey and Tamarboga, reigned each of them about two months, and were succeeded by Al Ashraf Caitbey.^a

A. D. 1468.—The power of the successors of Tamerlane had shrunk into the east; and the Ottoman Turks were chiefly engaged in opposition to the christians, and those smaller Mohammedan states which they wanted to overwhelm. Caitbey, therefore, sat with

^a Abulpharaj. proleg. p. 26, 27; D'Herbelot, titre Koschkadam.

considerable tranquillity upon the throne of Egypt ; and, to preserve a bulwark between him and the Turks, he kept peace and amity with the knights of Rhodes. A. D. 1481, Mohammed II sent Mesih Pasha to lay siege to Rhodes; and every effort was made to wrest it from the knights. Spies were employed to discover its state of defence ; to mislead, if possible, the operations of the knights ; and to pursue every measure which might facilitate the downfall of their power. But these artful schemes were detected; a brave resistance was made to every attack; and the proud Mohammed was frustrated in his favourite view.

Soon after this event, Mohammed II died, and between his son Bajazet and Zizim, or Jem, there was a keen struggle for power ; but Bajazet was successful, and Zizim fled to Egypt for protection and support. Caitbey applied to Bajazet in behalf of his brother; and that ambitious prince covered his designs, by offering Zizim the sovereignty of a province.

The sultan of Egypt was unwilling to involve himself in war ; and knowing, also, the uncertainty of success, if Zizim should renew, against his brother, the conflicts of the field, he persuaded him, on every account, to accept the offer which Bajazet had made. But Zizim knew the cruelty of his brother ; was acquainted with the perfidy of the Ottoman court ; and therefore resolved to avoid a situation which would expose him to the power of the weak but cruel Bajazet. He cast himself, therefore, into the arms of the knights of Rhodes ; but, being born to the destiny of the unfortunate, he was sent, as it appeared, for safety into the kingdom of France ; but, by perfidy and cowardice, his interests were neglected, and he was cut off by poison. Bajazet did not go openly to war with the sultan of Egypt, but he privately disturbed his possessions in Asia Minor, and struck a more effectual blow, by guarding the passes of the Circassian mountains, and thereby prevent-

ed the supply of slaves, upon which the strength of Egypt then depended. But Caitbey died, when he had reigned somewhat more than twenty-nine years.^a

A. D. 1496.—Abusaidat Mohammed seized the government, but was instantly dispossessed by another for a few days, and then restored. He had not sat upon the throne, however, four months, when Cansu was elevated to the situation of sultan; but in less than two years he was cut off by death; and his successor Janbalat scarcely reigned seven months, when Tuman Bey ascended the throne; but his reign extended to little more than ninety days.^b

A. D. 1501.—Cansu, or, as the European writers term him, Campson Gauri, was raised to the Circassian throne, by the unanimous consent of the whole nation. It is probable that the Egypti-

^a D'Herbelot titre Caietbai; Vertot. tom. iii, liv. 7; & Cantemir's Ottoman Hist. title Bajazet II, fol. London, A. D. 1734.

^b Deguignes, tom. i, liv. 5.

ans were now again permitted to have free access into Circassia for slaves ; for we find the new sultan and Bajazet II united in a league against the knights of Rhodes, and apparently in terms of friendship.

Campson Gauri had his anxiety directed, on the one hand, towards the knights of Rhodes, and, on the other, towards the subjects of Portugal, who traded in the Indian seas. It appeared, in a former part of this history, that, a few years previous to the period at which we have now arrived, the Portuguese discovered a passage to India by the Cape of Good Hope ; but, not content with trading in those seas, and thus enjoying the riches of that country, they determined to make settlements upon the coasts, and acquire a sovereignty in that part of the world. Some of the Indian princes applied to Egypt for support, and solicited the aid of the court of Grand Cairo, not only to defend them from the power of Portugal, but also to

protect the religion of Mohammed from the insults and enmity of a christian state. As Campson professed to be the lord of Mecca, and protector of that holy city, he readily promised assistance in behalf of the Moslem cause.

Having obtained leave from Bajazet to have a supply of timber from the forests of Cilicia, he employed artificers in all his ports, and fitted out numerous vessels, for the accomplishment of his views. His attempts against the power of Portugal were probably of no avail; and the knights counteracted his projects in the Mediterranean sea. Sometimes they intercepted the timber destined for building his ships; and often they seized his vessels, which were employed in trade as well as in plunder.

A. D. 1507.—The Egyptians, still having a considerable share in the traffic of India, were accustomed to dispose of their articles of commerce in various ports of the Mediterranean sea. Exposed to danger from the knights of Rhodes,

they had been obliged, for several years, to employ, in that valuable trade, a ship of immense size, and completely armed. It was built after the ancient Egyptian manner ; consisted of several stories ; accommodated a thousand soldiers for its defence ; was mounted with a hundred pieces of cannon ; and might rather be denominated a floating castle than a ship. Often had the knights of Rhodes been desirous of meeting with this unwieldy, but valuable, vessel ; and, by means of a secret correspondence with the kingdom of Egypt, they were now informed at what time the ship was to sail ; and they provided means for making it a prize.

Gastineau, the commander of Limoges, was intrusted with the admiral's galley, and required to watch the vessel, and endeavour to seize it. Having cruised, but for a short time, near the island of Candia, the important ship made its appearance ; and did not deign to shun the approach of the Rhodian

galley. The brave knights summoned the vessel to surrender, but received an answer of contempt and defiance. Instantly the galley poured in a broadside; and so well directed was the fire, that the captain, with several of his principal attendants, were killed upon deck. This unexpected blow filled the ship with confusion; and when the volley was on the point of being repeated, she immediately struck, and the crew solicited mercy. The news of this defeat were deeply felt by the merchants of Alexandria; and the shame of it spread a blush upon the court of Grand Cairo.^b

A. D. 1512.—Selim I ascended the throne of the Turks, after he had deposed, and perhaps poisoned, his father. As he was himself the youngest of the family, he secured his succession by the death of both his brothers; and, in the full current of ambition, began to en-

^b Abulpharaj. proleg. p. 29; & Vertot, tom. iii, liv. 8.

large the boundaries of his empire. To resist the fury of his power, a treaty of friendship and mutual protection was entered into, by the king of Persia, the sultan of Egypt, and the grand-master of Rhodes. Having invaded successfully the territories of Shah Ishmael, king of Persia, Selim afterwards directed his march toward Syria, and engaged Campson Gauri in the neighbourhood of Aleppo. The whole kingdom of Egypt was in a revolutionary state; and the emirs of Damascus had long been rebellious. The governors of Syria and Asia Minor were attached to the interests of Selim; and, in the day of battle, betrayed the sultan of Egypt. Posted, the one on the right, and the other on the left, wing of his army, they abandoned their station, and joined the forces of Selim. So much were the Egyptian army astonished, that they were in danger of running into confusion, and taking flight; but the commands and example of their sultan restored order; and the

battle was maintained with obstinacy and valour. At length, however, they were overpowered, and as Campson Gauri was attempting to rally the broken ranks, he was unavoidably overwhelmed in the confusion, and trampled to death by the feet of the cavalry.

A. D. 1516.—Selim, having secured Syria, directed his victorious course toward Jerusalem, the place of so many prophets, and so many pilgrims; and, having offered up his devotions in the mosque of the temple, he bent his way toward Egypt. In the meantime, the Circassian chiefs had rallied their forces, and placed Tuman Bey upon the throne of that country. But, notwithstanding a brave resistance, the Circassians were overcome, and the Borgite dynasty was destroyed, A. D. 1517; and then the kingdom of Egypt became a province of the Ottoman empire. Tuman Bey fled to an Arabian sheik, where he was kindly received, and promised protection; but, contrary to the laws of honour and

nations, he was given up to the conqueror, and subjected to the will of Selim. Some have attempted to shew with how much clemency he was received ; but whatever marks of respect were exhibited for a time, we know that he soon suffered violence, and was basely hanged at Zavila, one of the gates of Grand Cairo.^c

^c Abulpharaj. proleg. p. 29, 30 ; D'Herbelot, titre Selim Khan ; and Cantemir' Hist. title Selim I.

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